



2001/02

**Best Value
Performance
Plan**

Powys County Council

Best Value Performance Plan

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Introduction

1.1 Foreword & Statement of Responsibility

This Performance Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory guidance issued by the National Assembly for Wales.

The County Council is responsible for the preparation of this Performance Plan, the information and assessments contained therein and the assumptions and estimates on which they are based and is satisfied that the information contained within the plan is in all material respects accurate and complete and that the plan is realistic and achievable.

1.2 Powys County Council

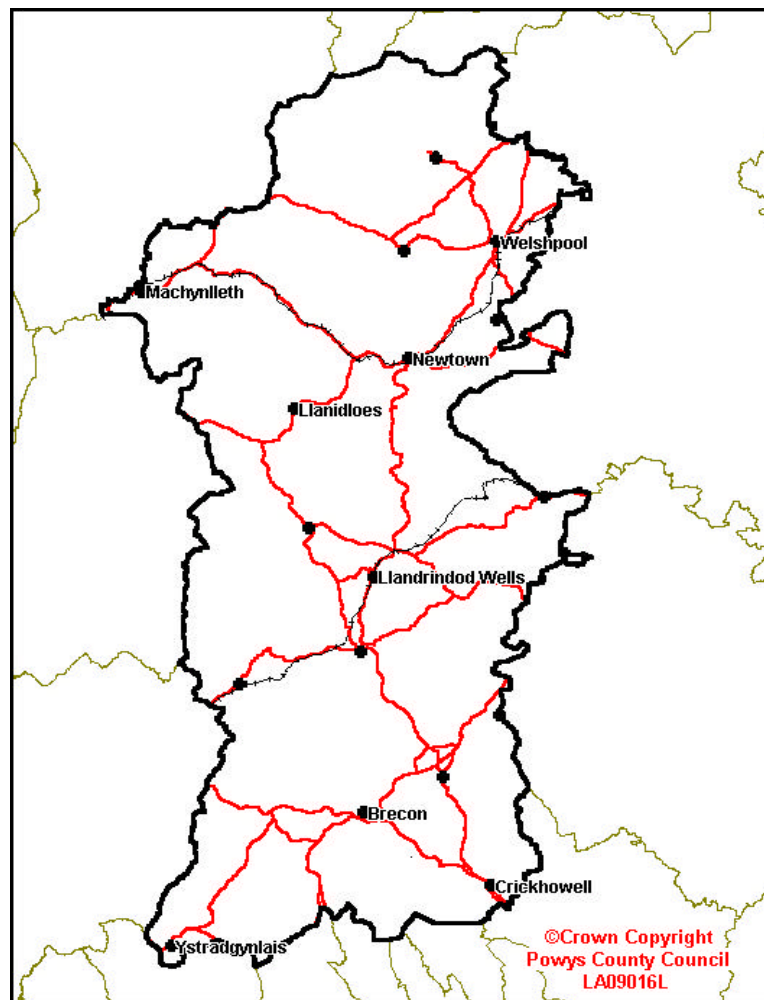


Figure 1: Plan of Powys showing main centres of population

Powys is a county covering 5,197 square kilometres of varied topography, with a population of 126,300 (1999 Mid Year Estimates), giving a population density per square kilometre of 24.3.

The main centres of the County are market towns, of which only one exceeds a population level of 10,000 –Newtown in the Severn Valley. The largest town in the South of the County is Brecon.

Although the Administrative centre is based in Llandrindod Wells, geographically central to the County, the Council operates from a number of other sites located across Powys, including Welshpool, Newtown, Machynlleth, Knighton, Builth Wells, Brecon and Ystradgynlais.

A full listing of the services provided by Powys County Council is detailed within the Council's A to Z Directory, which can be accessed through our Webpage: www.powys.gov.uk. This Directory details the services provided and who you should contact for the relevant service information. Alternatively please ring our main switchboard 01597 826000, or our Out of Hours contact number, Powys Careline on 01597 825275 for service information.

2. Vision and Strategic Aims

The County Council accepts its responsibility as a Leader within the community and the way in which we as a whole, interact with the communities represented and served, is central to that Community Leadership. This role was recognised by the Local Government Act 2000 which placed a duty upon the Council to prepare “community strategies” to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. The National Assembly issued draft guidance in January 2001 and the County Council will prepare its Community Strategy in accordance with the “final” guidance in due course.

The County Council's Corporate Plan was adopted in July 2000 and sets out the priorities for the current Council's term of office until 2003. The five key themes in the Plan are interdependent, and recognise the uniqueness of Powys as the most rural and sparsely populated county in England and Wales.

These key areas will

- ensure that the County Council provides leadership within the Community;
- provide a quality of service which is recognised as good value for money and which meets the needs of its citizens;
- promote social inclusion and combat social exclusion;
- promote economic and community regeneration; and
- enhance and protect the environment.

2.1 Local Government Act 2000 - New Political Structures

Following the Government's announcements of its proposals to encourage revisions to the way local authorities operate, the Council has been looking at how it can improve and modernise the way it works. A Working Party on Political structures was established before the enactment of the Local Government Act 2000. The Working Party commenced by using workshop and seminar means to encourage and stimulate debate amongst members as to their future structure of the member decision-making process in the Authority. A similar approach was taken to explore these issues in greater detail with all members of the Council being involved.

Draft proposals were being worked up during the summer and early autumn of 2000, and these were discussed with officials at the National Assembly. Following the announcement by the National Assembly of a Fourth Option for councils in Wales, the Working Party and the Council as a whole has been looking at how best the proposed new arrangements would fit

into this Fourth Option.

In producing its proposals the Council is keen to ensure that all members have a valid and purposeful role, that decision making is improved, that meaningful arrangements for policy development and scrutiny can be built in to the new system, and last but by no means least, that the existing benefits given by the operation of the three Shire Committees can be maintained and improved.

The Council has acknowledged a clear timetable for this work. Further discussion on the details of a Fourth Option-based proposal will continue during the summer. Full consultation will take place, in line with the National Assembly Guidelines, between August and October.

The results of that consultation process will then influence and determine the Council's final arrangements, to be submitted to the National Assembly by January 2002. The Council envisages the new structure being fully operational by 1st April 2002, which is within the National Assembly's requirements.

2.2

Standards

The Local Government Act 2000 also contained new requirements in respect of ethical standards. The Council has had a Standards Committee in operation for approximately two years now, comprising four councillors and three independent members. The Standards Committee is currently chaired by one of the independent members. The Committee has established its rules and procedures for dealing with matters that might come before it, and has also produced some guidelines to assist members in their role.

During the last six months, guidelines to assist members in dealing with lobbying in respect of planning applications, have been produced by the Standards Committee, discussed with all members, and circulated to members and community councils.

Details of the National Assembly's requirements in respect of Standards Committees are currently being produced. It is anticipated that some modest changes may be required to the existing committee to ensure it is fully compliant with the National Assembly's new requirements. In particular, the Committee will be looking at the requirements of its new role in relation to town and community councils within Powys. Once the Assembly's regulations and guidelines on this aspect are clear, the Committee will be conducting a comprehensive liaison and information process with all the town and community councils in Powys to make them aware of the new arrangements, and to discuss and agree the new

procedures that will be required.

Target:

Process to be complete by 31st March 2002.

3. Summary and Comparison of Performance

The year ending 31st March 2001 was another challenging year for the County Council. It has operated within tight financial constraints whilst having to react to external influences entirely out of its control such as the national fuel crisis in the Autumn, the severe flooding during the Winter and the outbreak of Foot and Mouth in the Spring. These situations have inevitably impacted upon the activities of the Council with the result that some of our targets were not met.

However the Council responded quickly and responsibly to every situation and fulfilled its Community Leadership role. For example, in addition to working with the State Veterinary Service to help control and eradicate the Foot and Mouth Disease, the Council set up a mini call centre within days of the outbreak, to provide help and advice to thousands of people from within and without the County.

3.1 Performance Incentive Grants

The Council has entered into a Policy Agreement with the National Assembly under the Performance Incentive Grant Initiative and has agreed to deliver certain specific outcomes reflected in the National Assembly's Corporate Plan "Better Wales". The Policy Agreement is based on the understanding that problems to be tackled and opportunities to be grasped can only be handled effectively if the broad policy framework and the key objectives are shared between the National Assembly and the Local Authority, whilst leaving maximum discretion with the Authority for local flexibility in how they are to be achieved.

In recognising the differing local circumstances experienced across Wales the National Assembly has invited each local authority to set its own targets for the indicators within the categories of, "Better Opportunities for Learning", "Better Health and Wellbeing", "A Better, Stronger Economy" and "Better Quality of Life".

The targets set by the Council for these indicators can be found at Appendix E.

3.2 National Performance Indicators

The Council is required to report on its general performance in a number of key areas set initially by the Audit Commission, and likewise with the advent of Best Value, by the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW). The provisional performance data for the year to 31st March 2001 and the comparative data for the year ending 31st March 2000 are shown in Appendix F. In addition the National Assembly for Wales has designated targets for five key performance indicators, four of those are based on

the performance level of the top 25% of local authorities, with the fifth being set by central government. Progress against these targets is shown in Appendix G.

These statutory measures of performance allow the Council to compare itself not only with other Welsh Authorities but also with those in England, in order that it can strive to improve service delivery, in line with the “best performers”. In addition, the following section provides an overview of some of the actions taken to achieve the objectives of the corporate plan and the targets for future years.

4. Community Leadership

Aim: To ensure that the Council provides leadership within the Community

The Council's Corporate Plan identified five key actions for this area and an indication of some of the measures taken to date are described below

KEY ACTION *The Council will compile an audit of the County based on the sixteen planning areas by bringing together the range of data already available*

Progress This has not progressed as quickly as was originally intended, as there are currently no staff resources to dedicate to the work of carrying out the audit, and starting the process of consultation.

Target To complete the audit by 31st March 2002.

KEY ACTION *Consult with Community and Town Councils as to their priorities, and their vision for their locality.*

Progress The Council's Corporate Plan envisaged that formal meetings would take place between the Shire Committees and the respective Community and Town Councils in their areas. This has happened in the Radnorshire area in that the Radnorshire Committee has formally met the Community Councils on four occasions since the inception of Powys. The other Shire Committees have yet to make any arrangements for meetings.

Target To arrange at least one formal meeting between each of the Shire Committees and the Community and Town Councils in their areas by 31st March 2002.

KEY ACTION *Put building sustainable communities at the heart of what it does. In its statutory plans for Powys, based on that data and consultation, the County Council will aim to reflect the different aspirations and needs of each locality, and will identify what it will do to support capacity building within the community*

Progress

In 1999 the Council consulted widely upon the first stage of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and follow up consultation was undertaken in the summer of 2000. The results of this consultation will be incorporated into the UDP.

Strategic Plans drawn up or updated during the year included the Corporate Plan, The Transport Plan, The Waste Management Plan, The Leisure and Recreational Plan, Social Services Strategic Plan and the Education Strategic Plan.

A complete list of the statutory and non statutory strategic plans prepared by the Council in consultation with its communities is shown in Appendix B.

Target

Plans to be adopted following appropriate consultation:

- Arts Strategy by 31st March 2002
- LA21 Strategy by 31st December 2001

To prepare first consultation draft UDP by 31st December 2001.

KEY ACTION

To work in partnership with communities, and agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors to address issues of local concern.

The Council has continued to work with a number of partnerships which focus upon important areas such as Health Improvement, Crime and Disorder, Economic Development and EU funding programmes, Regeneration and Tourism amongst others.

Progress

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a legal responsibility on the Police and Local Authorities to work together, and with other partners, to tackle offending and the fear of crime. In response to this the Powys Community Safety Group was formed with representation from Dyfed Powys Police, The County Council, Powys Probation Service and the Voluntary Sector.

The Group was tasked with drawing up a Community Safety Strategy for the County for the period 1999/2002, with the aim of reducing the level of crime by 5% over the 3 years. The total reduction in crimes for Powys for the two years of the strategy amounts to 13%.

Whilst Powys is an area which enjoys a relatively low level of crime it is understood that there is a perception that the levels are much higher than they are in fact. The Strategy recognises that individual perceptions of quality of life are influenced by a number of factors, including:

Crime and the fear of crime,
Disorder and the fear of disorder,
Sense of security, and
Road safety

The Council's commitment to work co-operatively with the Voluntary Sector across all spheres of community life in Powys was formally recognised in February 2001 when it established a Local Compact with the Voluntary Sector. This initiative will bring about tangible benefits and will guide the development of a successful relationship between the two sectors.

The feasibility of setting up a Consumer Support Network - a recent Department of Trade and Industry Initiative in Powys, is being actively pursued with the local Citizens Advice Bureaux and the Powys Community Legal Partnership. Such Networks are designed to encourage local providers to come together to offer good quality consumer advice.

Target

In order to ensure that consistent and accessible Community Legal Services are available across the county, Town and Community Councils will be consulted on a Draft Powys Advice Services Strategy during May/June 2001.

KEY ACTION

Incorporate both community consultation and community advocacy into the statutory and non-statutory plans which underpin its work and will ensure that the National Assembly for Wales and its elected Members are aware of Powys and its priorities.

Progress

The Council takes an active part in national policy making via the Welsh Local Government Association and acts regularly as advisor in respect of a range of matters affecting Powys, such as rural development, tourism, the countryside and public rights of way.

5. Service Delivery

Aim : To Provide a quality of service which is recognised as good value for money and which meets the needs of its citizens;

KEY ACTION *The Council will ensure that services are reliable, accessible and provided equitably across all parts of Powys.*

Progress **Access to public buildings.**

During 2000/2001, surveys were carried out on all of the 125 Council's buildings which are open to the public. Of these, only 36 were found to meet the revised specification under part M of the Building Regulations 1991. In order to meet the Council's duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 1998 to ensure that access is provided where reasonable, consultation with the three local access groups in Powys was undertaken.

Part M is due to be revised shortly and the requirements tightened up. For this reason, applying this legislation to older, possibly listed buildings is sometimes structurally impossible. The result is that only a proportion of the buildings classified as public buildings can be made accessible for the purpose of the indicator. Nevertheless, a programme of works has been planned for the future to ensure access for the disabled is improved where appropriate. These works are to the value of £50,000 for 2001/02 and £23,000 for 2002/03.

Table 1: No of Powys County Council Buildings which are Open to the Public and are Accessible to Disabled People.

PI Description	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	Target 2002/03
No of Powys County Council Buildings Which Are Open To The Public	112	125	125	125	125
No of Those Buildings Which Are Accessible To Disabled People	30	36	40	41	42

Improvement works undertaken during 2000/2001 included installing automatic doors at County Hall in Llandrindod Wells, the installation of a lift at Neuadd Maldwyn in Welshpool, completion of works at the Gwalia in Llandrindod Wells, including a cash counter and an automatic door and undertaking works to the external steps at the Judges Lodgings, Presteigne.

Progress

Condition Surveys.

In response to the Audit Commission's 'Hot Property' report, the County Council has established an Asset Management Working Group to enable it to gain the maximum benefit from its assets.

Detailed information on the condition of the County Council's property stock will be vital for the implementation of an effective Asset Management system. Work on this started in 1998 when the condition of school buildings were assessed followed by the Elderly Persons Homes and a programme to survey the majority of the remaining Powys buildings was commenced in 1999.

Target

To survey 85% of the total building stock by 31st March 2002, and all buildings by 2004

Progress

E-Government

The Government has set targets for English Authorities to deliver services electronically by 2005. The National Assembly for Wales has not yet set targets for Welsh Authorities but it is anticipated that it will do so in the near future. The County Council has recognised the importance of being able to provide services in this way and has appointed an Elected Member to act as a Champion. A working group of officers has been tasked to prepare a strategy for consideration so that the Council will be well placed to respond to the challenge and take advantage of any funding opportunities which occur. This strategy will be used as the basis for a statement on how the Council will implement electronic government.

In addition the Council has been a core member of an initiative Promoting Electronic Government (PEG) aimed at furthering the Government's agenda for the introduction of e-government services. The project draws on the developmental work of pioneering local authorities to identify and promote best practice, and to provide benchmarking tools and benchmarks for local authorities developing new electronic forms of service presence.

In order to improve access to services an electronic “A to Z” of Council Services has been developed for the internet and intranet, and went online in April 2001.

Target To prepare an implementing electronic government statement by the 31st December 2001.

Progress **Welsh Language Scheme**

The Council is conscious that it has a role in sustaining and fostering the County’s Welsh language heritage. To this end the Council has a Welsh Language Scheme which includes a range of measures for improving access and provision of a wide range of high quality Welsh language services. In its Corporate Plan the Council has made a number of policy statements. They are as follows:-

Policy statements

- ◆ The Council offers the public an opportunity to choose which language they wish to use in dealing with the Council.
- ◆ The Council acknowledges that the public are better equipped to convey their needs in their chosen language.
- .. The Council acknowledges that offering language choice is a matter of ‘good practice’.

A priority for the Council has been to increase its capacity to deliver face to face service bilingually in public contact workplaces where staff meet the public on a daily basis.

An indication of the Council's is performance in relation to bilingual service provision is shown below:

Table 2: Local Performance Indicators responding to the Public

REF	Local Performance Indicators : SERVICE DELIVERY	1999/00	2000/01	Target 2001/02
SD1.3	Public meetings held in Welsh or bilingually	50	75	85
SD1.4	Major publications for the public issued bilingually	100%	100%* (28 docs)	80%
SD1.5	Bilingual forms issued for use by the public	80%	80% (89 in all)	80%
SD1.6	Press notices in line with the Welsh Language Scheme • 243 job advertisements # • 94 Press releases # • 181 legal/ planning notices #	100%	100%#	100%

SD1.7	The number of staff receiving or having received training	97	81	95
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*The target for the publication of bilingual documentation is set at 80% for all documents published, to take account of the target audience. For 00/01 this target was exceeded with all major documentation being published bilingually.

A comprehensive action plan aimed at improving access to Welsh language services has also been underway. All Departments have identified an increasing number of Welsh-speaking staff who are able to assist the public at the first point of contact, a leaflet and website publicising their names and contact details have also been launched. A review of the number of staff recruited during this year is being conducted at present as part of the annual monitoring process.

The Council reports annually to The Welsh Language Board on a range of performance indicators. The Board's judgement on the Council's performance in 1999/2000 was as follows:-

'We conclude, therefore, that the Council's current performance can be appropriately expressed as follows:

Target:

Criteria	1999/00	2000/01
Service Delivery:	Fair and improving	Good
Scheme Management:	Good	Good and improving

KEY ACTION

The Council will set clear standards for service delivery and ensure that monitoring and reporting mechanisms are effective

Progress

Dealing with the Public

The County Council has an established Code of Practice and specific Internal Complaints procedure for all Departments. Complaints may also be made to the Local Government Ombudsman for Wales.

The number of complaints from the public has fluctuated below the Welsh average of 37 for 99-00 (Ombudsman Report), with the present year continuing the trend in the reduction of number of

complaints from that of the previous. The important statistic however, is the number of complaints in respect of which the Ombudsman finds as Maladministration. Since its inception in April 1996, only one finding of Maladministration, but attributed to three individual complainants, has been made against the new Powys County Council. The target for 2001/02, for complaints leading to a finding of Maladministration remains at 0.

Table 3: Best Value Performance Indicators - Dealing with the Public

Ref	Description	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
BV 5a	The number of complaints which were classified as: Maladministration	3	0	0
BV3	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority		57.02%	
BV4	The percentage of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints		37.35%	

The residents survey undertaken during the Autumn of 2000, revealed that of the 19716 respondents, 21% had indicated that they had made a complaint to the Council, and of those, 53% were not satisfied with the way in which that complaint was handled.

This is an issue which has been confirmed through the Public Interface Service Review and a number of measures will be put in place to ensure improvements are achieved in this area, which in addition to developing a revised Customer Care Programme, include standardising the internal recording, monitoring and complaints procedures.

KEY ACTION

The Council will ensure that Powys is served by a motivated and well-trained workforce.

Progress

The Council recognises that quality services need quality staff, and is committed to achieving the "Investors in People" Award as a recognised national standard for improving performance through its staff. At present three Departments have been recognised as "Investors in People", those being the Trading Standards Service, Central IT and Business Connect.

Target:

To achieve the “Investors in People” standard in all Departments by 2004

The Council has an identified Corporate Training Budget which resources training designed to meet Corporate requirements. The annual Corporate training Plan sets out the priorities each year, based on the objectives in the Corporate Plan, key Corporate Policies and identified skills gaps, and includes:

- Induction,
- Management Development,
- Training on Corporate Policies,
- Health and Safety Training,
- Welsh Language training,
- Customer Service Training, and
- Other generic skills training required for service delivery across the Council.

In addition, the Council has a Staff Review and Development Scheme which requires that all employees have annual reviews with their managers. At this review, annual work objectives are set with reference to Business Plan Objectives and training and development needs identified.

During the year 2000/01 there has been a particular emphasis on training managers for Best Value and Health and Safety with 106 internal courses of varying types and lengths being run, offering a total of 1066 training places. A number of courses were cancelled because of problems arising from the Fuel Crisis and, later, the Foot and Mouth crisis.

The Corporate Training Budget allocation for 2000/1 was £72,614. £68,607 was spent within the financial year with a further £4,000 commissioned. A further £427,254 was spent by departments on professional and technical training. The Corporate Training Budget for 2001/2 is £75,620.

Progress**Performance Management Framework**

The Council's preparations for the implementation of Best Value highlighted the necessity for the development of an integrated performance and financial management framework focussed upon continuous improvement across the whole authority. In its response to the Statutory Report issued by the District Auditor upon the Authority's arrangements for Best Value the Council indicated that it intended introducing such a framework from the 1st April 2001.

The agreed framework links the Council's aspirations in its Corporate Plan, through Departmental Service Plans and Unit Business Plans to the individual and team planning process and identifies the reporting mechanisms to ensure accountability at the

various levels.

6. Social Inclusion

AIM: To Promote Social Inclusion and Combat Social Exclusion

KEY ACTION *The Council believes that the early years are a vital time in the development of individual children, and that measures to support children and families play a major part in combating exclusion and disadvantage.*

The Powys Early Years and Childcare Partnership, including the voluntary and private providers of early years education, is committed to working in full co-operation to ensure appropriate provision for the under-fives and to involve parents and guardians in the education of their children. It also aims to identify special needs at an early age so that educational support can be integrated with other aspects of child care.

In Powys, there are currently sufficient places for 4 year olds in the maintained school sector to meet parental demand. The Early Years Development and Childcare Plan (EYDCP), approved by the WO/NAW, concentrates on the qualitative and entitlement objectives that should improve existing provision and address the future needs of 3 year olds.

The LEA is seeking to ensure that as a minimum:

- all Powys children in pre-statutory education follow a curriculum which effectively promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning;
- there is a commitment to continuous improvement in the standards and quality of early years education

Progress The County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA) maintains 108 primary schools, 13 secondary schools and 3 special schools. In the year ending 31st March 2001, places for 20621 children were provided. The role of the LEA is to support school improvement, manage access to education, provide services to children with special educational needs, deliver services to individuals and provide strategic management.

Targets Each year targets for all pupils are set in the Education Strategic Plan and performance is measured against them, as shown below:

Table 4: Key Stage 2 - Pupils reaching level 4 or above

REF	Subject	99/00		Comparison 1999/00		00/01		01/02
		Target	Actual	Wales	England	Target	Actual	Target
NAW PI 2.4b	English	73%	77.6%	68%	70%	73%	79.7%	75%
NAW PI 2.4a	Maths	74%	72.7%	67%	69%	74%	75.3%	78%
NAW PI 2.4c	Welsh	70%	80.6%	65%	not avail	70%	76.8%	77%
NAW PI 2.4d	Science Test		83.7%	77%	78%	80%	85.9%	82%
The standards attained by children in Powys put the LEA in the top 25% of LEA's in Wales for the third year in succession.								

Table 5: Key Stage 3 - Pupils reaching level 5 or above

REF	Subject	99/00		Comparison 1999/00		00/01		01/02
		Target	Actual	Wales	England	Target	Actual	Actual
NAW PI 2.5b	English	76%	70.4%	61%	63%	76%	67.8%	77%
NAW PI 2.5a	Maths	75%	69.6%	60%	62%	75%	69.3%	76%
NAW PI 2.5c	Welsh	65%	87.3%	71%	not avail	65%	77.8%	77%
NAW PI 2.5d	Science	83%	67%	55%	55%	83%	71.8%	81%
Although Powys maintained the lead performance position for the second year in succession at the top of the first quartile of LEA's in Wales in all the core subjects, we did not meet our targets, except in Welsh. Overall there were broad similarities with the Powys results for 1999 and this pattern was mirrored in the all-Wales figures.								

Table 6: Key Stage 4 - Pupils achieving at least 5 A*-C grades at GCSE.

REF		99/00		Comparison 1999/00		00/01		01/02
		Target	Actual	Wales	England	Target	Actual	Target
NAW PI 2.2	Powys	56%	55%	48%	45%	56%	55%	58%
Our target for the percentage of pupils gaining at least 5 A*-C grades was 56%, we achieved 55%, the same as 1999. This was still above the Welsh average and well within the top quartile of LEA's in Wales.								

Table 7: Key Stage 4 - Pupils leaving school without a recognised qualification

REF		99/00		Comparison 00/01		00/01		01/02
		Target	Actual	Wales	England	Target	Actual	Target
Best Target (ESP)	Powys		3%	5%	n/a	1%	5%	1%
We aimed to reduce the percentage of pupils leaving school without qualifications to 1%. We failed to meet that target and the performance achieved places us in the second performance quartile of LEA's in Wales. In this and in reducing the gender gap in performance, which is cumulatively widening we aim to improve over the next three years.								

Progress Children with Special Educational Needs

A priority in the Council's Education Strategic Plan 1999-2002 is to review and improve Special Educational Needs to identify and support the under five's and pupils of statutory school age with special and additional needs in order to meet their education entitlement. The Special Education Action Plan outlines how the LEA is increasing and improving specialist support for pupils with special educational needs, including provisions within Powys Schools for pupils with autism.

Progress Children First

In actively seeking to reduce social exclusion for young people the Council has worked in close collaboration internally and with external bodies such as the Health Authority and the Voluntary sector, to produce a Management Action Plan, "Children First ". This plan highlights the need to:

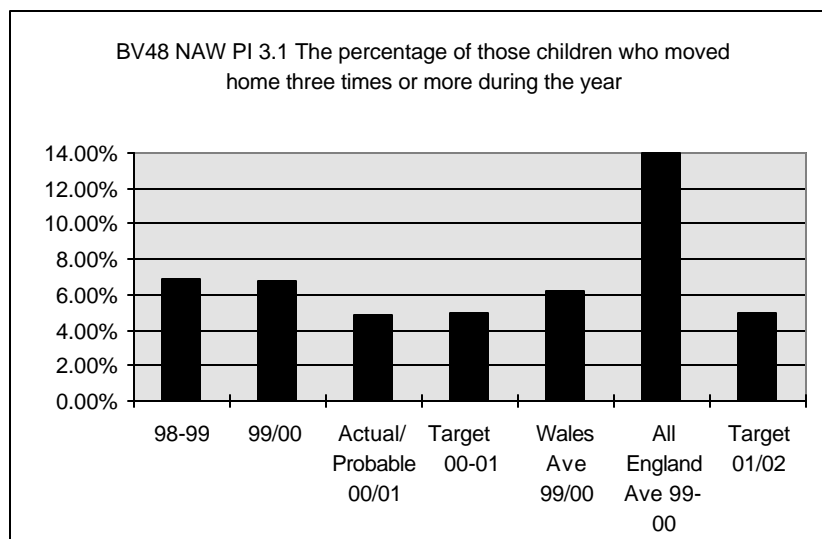
- plan strategically and work collaboratively across traditional boundaries;
- make the reduction of social exclusion, particularly for children and young people, a corporate priority; and
- set and achieve targets based on measurable outcomes.

Table 8: Key Indicators "Children First"

To promote the healthy development of individual children in need. Local authorities and health authorities should regard the health of the children they work with as both an indicator in its own right and as an indicator of the child's well being.		
SUB-OBJECTIVES	Phase 1 1998/99	Phase 2 1999/2000
Key indicators:		
completion of regular dental checks	21% (48 / 232)	30% registered with a dentist (117 / 393 children)
registration with a GP 288 children; minus 25 n/k = 263	90% (243 / 269)	99% registered with a GP (262 / 263 children)
take up of immunisations		70% received primary course immunisations (279 children)

Progress Children in care who have moved home three times or more

The percentage of children moved home three times or more during the year has taken a positive drop and sits well below the English and Welsh averages.



Progress Children and Youth Partnerships

We have developed a programme of working with all secondary schools as part of the Children and Youth Partnerships project to reduce both fixed term and permanent exclusions. Where specific difficulties in this area have been recognised in particular schools, these are being targeted and extra resources have been made available. The Council has also set targets within the Children First Plan 1999 and the Education Strategic Plan 1999-2002 to reverse the outcomes of disadvantage through addressing the levels of education achievement of particular groups of young people.

For a small minority of children whose needs cannot be met through conventional education, for a number of reasons, a complementary education compact will be drawn up. This will allow for individual education programmes to be developed specifically to meet the child's needs. This Compact involves tutoring the child outside of school but will include a timetable for reintegration, except in the most exceptional circumstances. Evidence is emerging that improved and sometimes imaginative service provision of is already being put in place for some pupils.

Table 9: Local Performance Indicators - Social Inclusion

REF	Local Performance Indicators SOCIAL INCLUSION – CHILDREN	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
SI1.1	Number of children looked after	60	75	Not Set
SI1.2	Children placed with foster carers (%)	80	80	80
SI1.3	Number of children on the child protection register	45	45	Not set
SI1.4	Number of Primary schools provided	108	108	109
SI1.5	Number of Primary school pupils educated (Jan)	11684	11673	11520
SI1.6	Number of Secondary schools provided	13	13	13
SI1.7	Number of secondary school pupils educated (Jan)	8454	8608	8657
SI1.8	Number of special schools provided	3	3	3
SI1.9	Number of special school pupils educated (Jan)	130	129	133

KEY ACTION

Powys is home to an increasing number of older people. The Council will ensure that the needs, and the contribution which older people can make to the community are both incorporated into its plans. It will also aim to provide for the needs of those with disabilities or mental health problems.

Progress

Safe Warm and Secure

In September 2000, the Council launched the "Safe Warm and Secure" campaign in partnership with the Health Authority, NHS Trust, local Care and Repair Agencies, the Police and Fire Authorities and the Voluntary Sector. This scheme aims to provide financial assistance to vulnerable homeowners with a package of measures designed to combat the effects of cold, improve safety in and around the home, and reduce the risk of crime by installing basic security measures.

Referral for grant assistance under this scheme is exclusively via General Practitioners and other health care professionals such as District Nurses. Health carers often treat the effects of poor or unsuitable housing conditions without the ability to seek straightforward assistance towards removing those conditions. This scheme will forge that link.

So far more around 250 referrals have been received under the scheme. 88 works have been completed, at a total cost of £35,000.

The scheme forms parts of a £1.127 million programme of schemes funded through Supplementary Credit Approval during 2000/01. Further funding has been secured to continue this scheme

in 2001/02.

Progress **Electric Blanket Safety**

Extending this theme of keeping safe and warm, the Trading Standards Service offered, for the fourth year running, a free electric blanket testing facility for Powys residents, targeting those individuals felt to be most at risk. Wardens in Sheltered Accommodation were approached and acted as collectors, bringing blankets to the Collection Points or Test Centres. Home visits were also made where it was deemed necessary.

A total of 380 blankets were brought in for testing over the five day period, an increase of 33% on last years figure, see table 1 below.

As part of a multi-agency approach, representatives from the Fire Brigade and Age Concern attended some centres and were able to pass on information on how to reduce the risks of danger when using electric blankets.

Table 10: Yearly Comparison of Electric Blanket Testings

Survey Year	Number Tested	Passed		Minor Faults		Major	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1997	395	123	31%	94	24%	178	45%
1998	369	117	32%	98	27%	154	42%
1999	284	150	53%	25	9%	109	38%
2000	380	175	46%	25	7%	179	47%

KEY ACTION

The Council acknowledges the part played by low income and rurality in social exclusion and will take steps to alleviate this.

Progress

Working through the Welfare Rights service the Council promoted the take-up of benefits through which people are eligible.

The Welfare Rights Officer's post is situated within the Social Services Department. The post was created to support staff and services users and their carers through the provision of Welfare Rights advice, support and training; and an individual service to those service users in complex situations.

Since the post was created over £1 million of welfare benefits (Income Support, Disability Benefits, Carers Benefits, etc) have been raised for service users and their families, whilst over £100,000 of additional income has been raised to the Department itself through the implementation of it's Charging Policy.

Over 500 families have been referred to the Welfare Rights Officer for investigation into their benefit position since the post was created

and over 8000 telephone enquiries have been taken.

In addition the Welfare Rights Officer works in close connection with the Powys Welfare Benefits Take Up Campaign.

The Campaign was created through the County Councils Anti Poverty Initiatives and initially was funded through the Welsh Office. In the past two years it has received core funding direct from the Council. The success of the Campaign is astounding.

By the end of the last financial year, the Campaign had raised over £3.2 million of disability related benefit income for people within Powys through primarily claiming the benefits of Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance, Income Support and Working Families Tax Credit. The number of referrals since the Campaign was started in 1998 now exceeds 3000.

The Welfare Rights Officer estimates that the number of referrals for his work within the Social Services Department should exceed 125 this year (2001/2002) with over £300,000 of benefit income raised and resulting in approximately £25,000 of income to the Department through it's Charging Policy.

Progress

Home Insurance

In recognition of that fact that many housing tenants may find it difficult to find the most appropriate Home Contents Insurance for them at a competitive price, the Council has teamed up with the Royal Sun Alliance to meet that need. Following negotiation and agreement with the Tenants Panels, the package on offer allows tenants to take advantage of low cost Insurance. Launched in 1999, there are currently 180 tenants (3%) in the scheme.

Target:

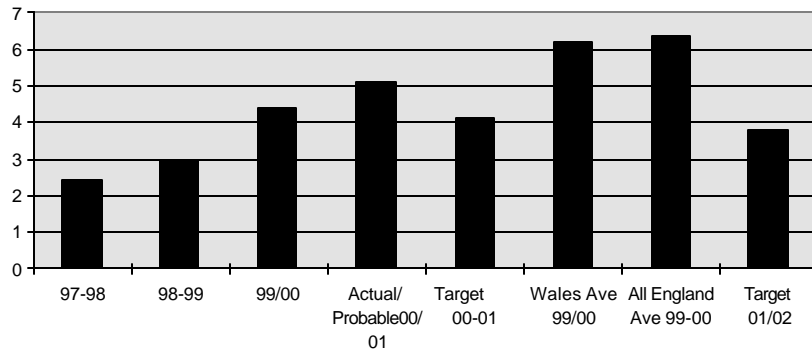
Through a programme of promotion, the Council will aim to increase the take-up over the next 12 months to 5% by April 2002.

Progress

Housing and Housing the Homeless

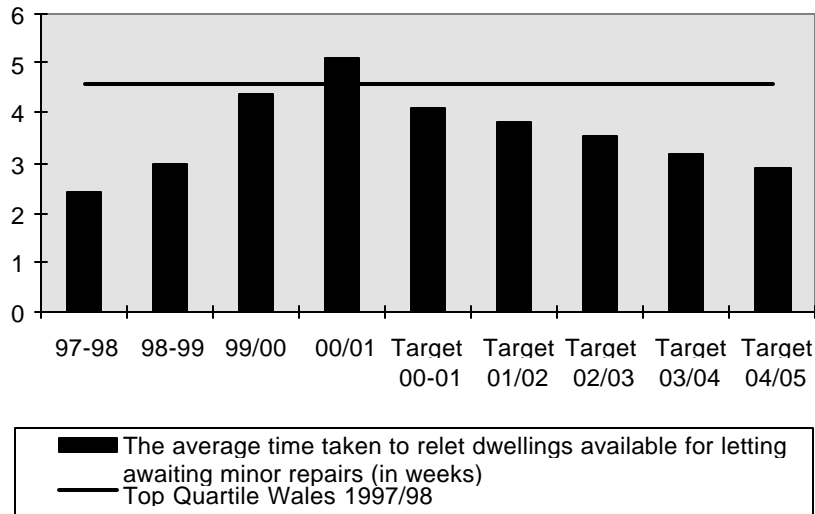
We are disappointed that the provisional figure shows an increase in the average re-let time over the last 12 months, although this is due to localised issues in one or two areas rather than because of general problems experienced across the County. It is especially disappointing that the Council is no longer in the top quartile of Welsh local authorities, based on 1999/00 figures.

BV68 NAW 4.7- The average time taken to relet dwellings available for letting or awaiting minor repairs (in weeks)



Target

The National Assembly has also required all Welsh Local Authorities to set a target for this indicator which over the next five years is consistent with the level of performance attained by the top 25% of Authorities.



A number of initiatives are currently being evaluated for reducing the amount of time it takes to re-allocate properties, especially where the predominance of difficult to let properties and the negative image of estates has caused problems. However, it may take some time to see evidence of tangible improvements.

It was intended to review Lettings and Voids during Year 2 of the Best Value Review Programme. This has since been deferred to Year 4 in order to link with the review of Waiting Lists and Transfers. However, it is proposed to informally review the service in order to address any failings in the service and to bring the Authority on track for meeting the 5 year target, see above and Appendix G, Top Quartile Indicators.

Progress Housing the Homeless

Performance Indicator	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
BV67 NAW 4.6 The proportion of homelessness applications on which the Authority makes a decision and issues notification to the applicant within 33 working days	New Indicator	90.87%	92.02%

The Council takes some satisfaction in the high percentage achieved in processing applications to assess homelessness within the set timescales, but recognises that there is still room for improvement. Homelessness Services will be the subject of a Best Value service review during 2001/02 and the outcome of the review will identify the areas for attention.

Progress Leisure Services

The Council recognises that leisure and recreation is beneficial to the quality of life for all members of society and that it can be an effective tool in reducing the number of socially excluded people.

In July 2000 the Community, Leisure and Recreation Department introduced the Leisure and Recreation Strategy. Supported by two former Welsh Rugby Team Captains; Robert Jones and Clive Rowlands, the strategy outlines the objectives which support the continued provision of a high quality, effective and efficient leisure and recreation service.

Target: To improve user satisfaction of the service by 2004/05

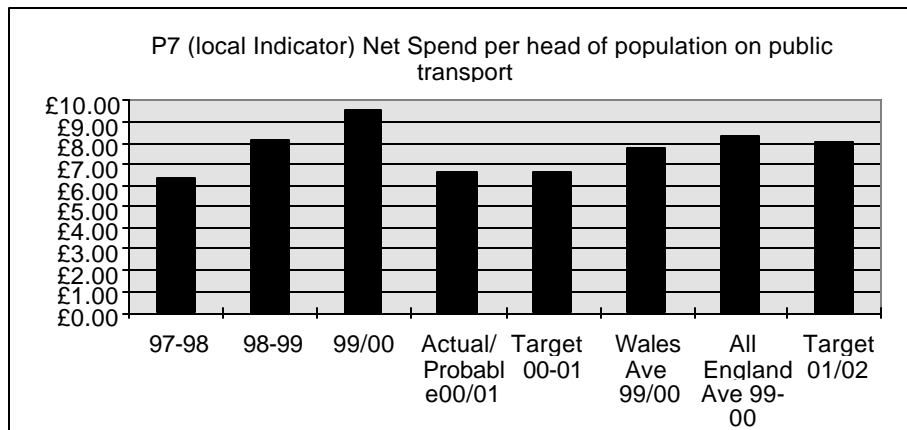
Service Area	Target
Leisure Centres	89%
Community Sports Centres	85%
Outdoor Activity Centres	86%
Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities	82%
Children's Playgrounds	76%
Parks & Open Spaces	82%

Progress

Public Transport

Net spending per head of population on public transport has remained consistent over the past few years and despite being a rural county and having a low population level, the spending is only slightly lower than the Welsh average, with the probable expenditure for 2000/01 being £6.62 (2p less than the projected target) .

However, the Council has made a commitment to increase the spending in this area for 2001/02 and has set a target of £8.05 per head of population. This indicator has also been removed from the statutory listing but due to the importance of public transport provision within the County this will be retained as a local indicator.



KEY ACTION

The Council recognises that tackling social exclusion and actively promoting social inclusion is a long term policy which requires consistent and reliable partnership working with agencies and communities.

The Council, in partnership with the voluntary sector, health services and the Powys Regeneration Partnership, is planning a conference to take place in October, 2001, to highlight the issues of rural poverty and discuss measures to promote social inclusion in a rural area.

The main purpose of the conference is to raise the profile of rural poverty and social inclusion issues in Powys and other rural areas. It will provide an opportunity for participants to announce and discuss new initiatives, and enable the Council to demonstrate its commitment to tackling social exclusion.

Progress

Tenant Participation

The Council currently manages a housing stock of more than 6,100 properties across Powys.

In 2000, the Council made a successful application for funding from the National Assembly for Wales to develop a "tenant participation compact". These will formally set out the services that tenants can expect from the Council, and how they can influence decisions affecting how these services are provided.

Intensive training has been undertaken by tenants and officers to ensure the smooth running of the Compact. A Compact Steering Group, chaired by a tenant, and comprising tenants, elected members and staff has now developed a draft Powys-wide compact. This will be subject to widespread consultation with tenants during the coming months. It is likely that the Powys Compact will be used as a framework for developing Neighbourhood Compacts at more local levels.

Progress

Partnership Working

In April 2000, the Council set up a "community housing agreement" with Mid Wales Housing Association Ltd covering a range of housing and non-housing issues. It is intended that this will establish a better framework within which both organisations will work together on development, strategic and operational issues;

In addition, the Council has been working with Registered Social Landlords in the drawing up of a programme of works to support further development which are part funded by social Housing Grant from the National Assembly for Wales.

Following the successful launch of the Newtown Foyer, which provides housing, training and employment opportunities for young people, the Council is working with a range of partners (including Registered Social Landlords, the Employment Service, Careers Guidance, TEC, Powys Probation Service and local communities) to establish similar facilities in Brecknockshire and Machynlleth.

Progress

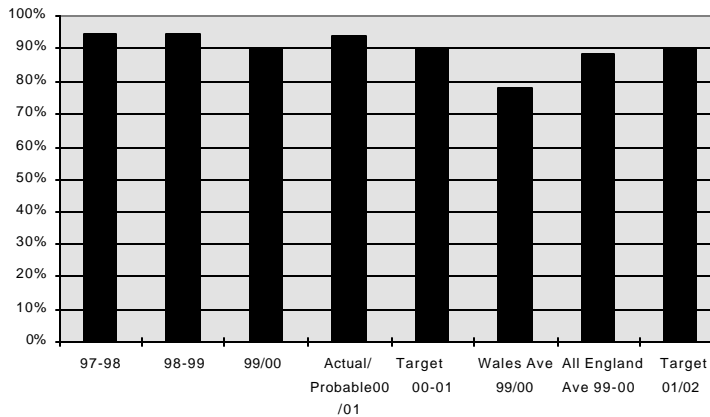
Provision of aid and adaptation equipment

The percentage of equipment costing less than £1000 provided within three weeks has remained steady and is above the Welsh and English averages.

Target

The equipment for daily living is now provided through contract with the Red Cross Stores. Whilst performance has therefore improved during 2000-01 the upper limit may now have been reached and the target for 2001-02 has been set at the current outturn.

BV56 (Local Indicator) Percentage of items costing less than £1000 provided within 3 weeks of assessment



Progress

People receiving help from the Authority

The Council policy has always been to give copies of assessments to service users (or their carers if appropriate). From 1st April 2001 the Department will record the number of care plans given to care users because some clients refuse copies of the plans. However the target has been set at 100% to reflect that all clients or carers will be given or offered a copy of the care plan.

PI	Indicator	Top Quartile (Wales)	Top Quartile (England)	Actual 1999/00	Probable 2000/01	Target 2001/02
BVPI 58/NAW PI 3.9	Percentage of adult clients receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The Authority's target for this performance indicator is to ensure that it continues to be within the top quartile for the next five years.

Table 11: Local Performance Indicators - Social Inclusion

REF	Local Performance Indicators SOCIAL INCLUSION - General	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
	Housing - Public Sector			
SI3.1	Number of Council Houses provided	6,301	6,196	6,090
SI3.2	Number of new lettings	727	636	750
SI3.3	Number of responsive repairs	17,306	20,697	18,500
	Housing - Private Sector			
SI3.4	Number of renovation grants approved	239	61	200
SI3.5	Number of Disabled Facilities Grants approved	333	197	250
SI3.6	Number of Home Repair Assistance applications approved	375	224	300
SI3.7	Number of other grants	3	1	2

7. Economic And Community Regeneration

AIM: To achieve a buoyant economy and thriving communities which provide prosperity and quality of life for the County's inhabitants.

KEY ACTION *The Council will ensure that the essential strategic framework is in place with all partners to promote, co-ordinate and prioritise services, initiatives and investment in economic and community regeneration.*

Progress A framework for co-ordinating economic development and regeneration work at county level will be incorporated into the Community Strategy which will be formulated within the context of the following Council policies:

- Local Futures (LA21) - developing sustainable local communities
- Anti-Poverty Strategy - combating social exclusion and providing equality of opportunity for the residents of Powys
- Powys Unitary Development Plan - setting the framework for the development and use of land, and
- Local Transport Plan - setting the framework for an integrated transport strategy for the County

The Council's strategic priorities for economic development were delivered in the context of the national economic development strategy and the strategies of various regional partnership organisations, as follows:

- Welsh Development Agency,
- Mid Wales Training and Enterprise Council,
- Mid Wales Partnership,
- Mid Wales Business Connects Consortium,
- Powys Agricultural Industry Forum,
- Tourism Partnerships, and
- Community Partnerships.

Target: To produce an Economic Development Statement each Spring

Progress

Powys Regeneration Partnership

In addition, the Council led in the development of the Powys Regeneration Partnership with all sectors, in the Summer of 2000. The aim of this Partnership is to achieve a co-ordinated, integrated and sustainable approach to economic, community and environmental regeneration throughout the County .

Work has since commenced in the four key areas of

- Human Resource Development
- Business Development
- Rural Development
- LEADER + Community Initiative Funding

The Partnership's initial focus is on "preparation of Local Action Plans (LAP) for EU funding and the co-ordination and appraisal of subsequent project bids for EU funding". The Partnership has also considered and endorsed bids for NAFW Communities First and LRF support, and Objective 3 Powys LAP has already been prepared while Objective 2 Powys LAP and Powys LEADER + Development Strategy have been drafted.

Target

Approval of Objective 2 LAP and LEADER + Development Strategy by Summer 2001.

KEY ACTION

The Council will promote the development of the existing business community and encourage appropriate business start-ups and inward investment, in close collaboration with its partners and will encourage the formation of competitive businesses which are innovative, technologically aware, embedded in the local economy and able to compete successfully in a global market.

Progress

Promoting business development

Through the network of 30 Telecentres, over 700 businesses and community groups received assistance in the 18 months to September 2000. In the same period, 21 new businesses were set up and 8 further jobs created through support from Telecentres.

During 2000/01, the Council approved 136 "Powys Business Grants" to the value of £392,846 to new businesses across the County. Generating an investment into the County of £982,464. This grant allocation is in excess of the 50 grants which were included as targets in the Corporate Plan, and as a result this has safeguarded,

or created, 248.5 jobs.

The Council provides and supports business development through Business Connect, by undertaking Business Advisory Sessions, encouraging new business connect clients, and by launching a new marketing campaign.

During 2000/01 the Council maintained and promoted 19 managed workspace sites within the County to meet the needs of new and developing businesses, which supported over 370 FTE jobs in some of the most rural parts of the County.

Target

To increase the level of FTE jobs to over 390 during 2001/ 2002, in the Council's workspace.

Table 12: Local Performance Indicators - Economic & Community Regeneration

REF	Local Performance Indicators	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
ECR 1	Number of business premises let	164	163	163
ECR 2	Number of Business Connect Centres operated	4	4	4
ECR 3	Business Advisory Sessions held	n/a	4000	4500
ECR 4	New Business Connect Clients	n/a	1359	1300
ECR 5	New Getting into Business Trainees Attracted	n/a	250	250
ECR 7	Local Business - Provide Grant Aid	50	73	50
ECR 8	Number of Business Workshops	167	167	167
ECR 9	Employment supported through Business Workshops	n/a	370	390
ECR 10	Unit Costs per Sq ft of Workspace Units (£)	0.53	0.85	0.90
ECR 11	Net Cost per job created in Business Workshops (£)	(174)	(194)	(200)
ECR 12	% of Business Workshops in Category C – Repair	n/a	26%	16%
ECR 13	Number of small holdings	215	209	206
ECR 14	Agri-Food Project Supported	5	5	5
ECR 15	Number of livestock markets supported (Sites owned by Powys)	7	7	7

ECR 16	Number of Street/Produce Markets supported(Sites owned by Powys)	7	7	7
ECR 17	Number of Tourist Information Centres Directly Managed	10	10	10

KEY ACTION

The Council will widen access to more diverse and better employment opportunities in all areas of Powys and will target support on economic sectors which are crucial to the local economy and have local growth potential.

Progress

Tourist Development

During 2000/01 the Council will have

- implemented the actions in the Mid Wales Integrated Tourism Strategy (Year 2),
- promoted Powys as a tourist destination through the Mid Wales Lakes and Mountains marketing campaign,
- worked with the Wales Tourist Board and others to ensure the effective marketing of Powys as a Tourism destination,
- submitted bids to the Wales Tourist Board's Tourism Destination Area initiative worth between £0.5 m and £1.0 m in capital grant to selected areas over 6 years,
- directly managed a network of 10 tourism information centres and provided support for the independently operated Tourist Information Centres, and
- maintained and developed the County's Rights of Way Network for access to the countryside and promoted the Council's cycling strategy and cycling trails.

Support for the Agriculture Industry included:

- the establishment of an Agrifood Project Fund to provide financial support for innovative initiatives which added value to the Agricultural/Food Economy to the County,
- liaising with the Agricultural Industry through the Powys Agricultural Industry Forum,

- support for the Primestock Producers Cymru by providing training for lamb quality improvement,
- support for Coed Cymru in seeking to add value to Welsh hardwood through good management of farm woodlands and product development, and
- implementing the actions identified in the review of the Council's smallholding estate in order to ensure the viability of the holdings and continue the environmental practice management project.

Progress

Rights of Way

The Council is the managing authority for all public rights of way work within the County covering 10,500km, and has the statutory responsibility of asserting and protecting the right to use all public rights of way, as well as carrying out maintenance upon them.

The Council has a policy of making payments to landholders or employing local contractors for the installation of standard kits for stiles, signposts, waymarker posts and bridle gates. This successful policy has recently been adopted by other unitary councils and has been warmly welcomed by farming unions and landholders as a positive way to tackle path management. The service also supports the local economy through the sourcing of all path furniture from local firms who supply this furniture to standard designs.

The situation surrounding the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease has had an obvious detrimental affect on the local economy of Powys through the immediate closure of all rights of way across the county. However, during this difficult time the council worked closely with its partner organisations including the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Forestry Commission with a view to re-open low risk paths. These paths were considered for re-opening following a full risk assessment and subjected to clear signing and marshalling to ensure walkers did not leave designated areas.

The current performance indicator covering rights of way is the percentage of the network which is a) signposted where footpaths leave a road and b) easy to use by members of the public. This calculation must be based on a survey of 5% of the total network, which the Authority cannot currently cover with the existing resources. However, as from April 2001 additional resources have been allocated allowing this survey to be completed and our obligations to reporting these performance indicators satisfied.

Coed Cymru

The principal achievements for reporting period Sept 1999 Aug 2000 include:

	Sept 1999 – Aug 2000	Target 1999/00
New Management Enquiries	115	195
Management Plans agreed	56	75
Area of woodland in plans (ha)	389	246
Volume timber harvested (m3)	908	705
Wooduser projects	29	27

KEY ACTION

The Council will promote links between all sectors of education and the local business community, to encourage wider career awareness, the take up of relevant vocational skills and the retention of young people in the local community.

Progress

During 2000/01 the Council provided financial assistance to GROWTH in order to, maintain the graduate and under-graduate placement programmes with Powys SME's; promoted the training skills provided at Antur Gwy in partnership with Coleg Powys and Builth Wells High School; promoted training provision through Business Connect; continued core funding for the Powys Careers Guidance Service, and supported partner organisations to improve provision and maximise take up of training opportunities through the New Deal Initiative, National Traineeship Scheme, Modern Apprenticeship Programme and company led Shared Apprenticeship Scheme.

Adult Education and Training plays a key role in providing access and opportunity for the adult population to pursue personal development throughout their lives. The principle of Life long Learning is at the heart of these services. Work is currently being undertaken with a number of agencies to consider the long term future delivery of Adult Education and Training Services with a range of agencies including ELWa, CETW, and the Powys CCET.

Work is also progressing through an established Benchmarking Club with the development of meaningful performance indicators to supplement current measures which include; a) monitoring the number of enrolments per 1,000 adult population and b) the spend per head on Adult Education.

TARGETS:

Ref	Performance Indicators	2000/01	2001/02
ECR 18	The number of enrolments of adult education courses per 1000 adult population	44.5	45
ECR 19	The spend per head on adult education	£1.68	£1.68

KEY ACTION

The Council will work with its partners to improve the co-ordination, integration and local delivery of public and voluntary sector services. It will thus empower communities by strengthening local skills and implementing shared local action plans for community regeneration.

The Council has supported Community Economic Development through a number of initiatives and partnerships, including:

- the Market Town's Initiative
- Brecon Town Centre Improvements
- providing core funding support for Mentor Powys during the transition between LEADER 2 and LEADER +
- Working with the Amman and Swansea Valley Regeneration Partnership
- Community Enterprise Project
- Supporting the expansion of Credit Unions
- undertaking an audit of community development initiatives and support provided by Public Sector Organisations

KEY ACTION

The Council will encourage business development by investing in workspace and tourism infrastructure, complementary to the Welsh Development Agency and Wales Tourist Board programmes and will facilitate economic and community development by promoting or investing in selective improvements to all forms of communication infrastructure.

Progress

In 1996, Powys County Council, on behalf of 24 organisations, was successful in gaining European Regional Development Fund assistance (ERDF) under the Regional Challenge Programme to prepare the people and businesses of rural Wales for the Information Society. The initiative commenced in January 1997 and became known as Llwybr.Pathway. The partnership which has grown to over 200 organisations is responsible for administering in excess of £4.9 million of ERDF assistance.

A Key element of the project was to develop a multi-agency rural

area network (MARAN) providing cost effective, efficient communications within the Region, including a dedicated connection to the internet.

The rural Welsh Authorities of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys together with the Llwybr.Pathway initiative are partners in the first development in collaborative working of its kind and scale in the UK. The three counties are now poised to address the traditional rural problems of poor infrastructure, low inward investment and high unemployment through this scheme which brings managed wireless broad band services to the heart of the region.

**Web
Hosting**

The web has become a key technology for providing information and access to services. The centre hosts over 180 departmental web sites, and hundreds of voluntary sector and community group sites in Powys.

**Internet
Service**

A link with the Internet provides for all users of the network to access the Internet. This includes Internet use by Schools. At peak periods, requests for information to the Internet run at over 60,000 an hour.

8. Environment - Natural and Built

AIM: To enhance and protect the environment and ensure quality and sustainability in new development.

KEY ACTION: *The Council will develop measures to conserve and enhance the landscape and its biodiversity.*

Progress In order to support this key action the Council has undertaken to:

- improve its information base
- Fulfil its responsibilities for conserving the environment
- undertake positive environmental improvements

In order to improve its information base the Council is a partner in the establishment of a Local Records Centre to computerise the County's existing biological records to make them more easily available in a standard format.

The Council also developed an environmental audit of the County Farm Estate and is a partner in the Wildlife Sites Project which aims to identify important sites across the County.

To conserve the environment the Council has developed a number of initiatives as shown below:

- The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 requires all local authorities to achieve a 30% improvement in domestic energy efficiency across all sectors by 2010. In November 2000 the latest progress report on achieving this target was published.
- Energy Efficiency advice is provided not just by Powys County Council, but also other public bodies funded by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, the private sector organisation South West Wales Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and Voluntary Organisations such as PAVO. To date a range of improvements have been implemented across the County, based on the advice given, and the results of such are shown in the table below.

GROUP

Table 13: ENERGY SAVINGS AND CO2 SAVINGS BY TENURE

Tenure Group	Energy Savings (Gj)	CO2 Saving (Tonnes)
PUBLIC	57501.20	4408.38
PRIVATE OO	49645.29	3806.10
PRIV RENT	748.93	57.42
HA	11403.54	874.26
Total Savings	119299.0	9146.16
		Saving %
Baseline GJ	6183953.00	1.93
Baseline CO2	474098.00	1.93
CO2/GJ	0.08	

The Council also works in partnership with a consortium of five other local authorities to develop joint initiatives to promote home energy efficiency. Together, they are currently operating a bulk discount scheme for people in rural areas known as "REACT" (Rural Energy Advice Community Teams). It is envisaged that the impact of this scheme will be reflected in the results of the 4th Annual HECA report in the Autumn of 2001. In promoting home energy efficiency, the Council also works closely with the Powys Energy Agency, established in 2000 with the assistance of Save II funding from the European Union.

Target: To achieve a reduction in CO₂ emissions in domestic properties from 474,098 tonnes CO₂ by 30% 2010

Progress **Waste Management Strategy**

A Waste Management Strategy and Recycling Plan, drawn up by Powys County Council has become the first in the country to gain official Government approval, and was submitted to the National Assembly in September 2000.

The strategy sets out how the council intends to work with local communities and businesses to tackle the growing problem of waste, its future management and ways to encourage recycling generally in the county.

Progress **Welshpool Kerbside Collection Scheme**

In September 2000, the Council launched a 6 month pilot scheme for kerbside collection in the North Powys town of Welshpool.

Involving 2500 households, special recycling sacks with printed coloured text were issued for the collection of plastic and tins and papers, card and textiles. The preliminary findings from this trial project, which ended in March, showed an increase in householder participation from 22% to 42% each week. In practice, far more households are actively participating by saving their bags until they are full before putting them out for collection.

A face-to-face survey with a sample of 150 households involved in the trial identified that 82% regularly use the service and all were satisfied with the collection service. Of particular interest arising from the pilot is the strong support for the service voiced by the elderly and infirm who would otherwise find it difficult to use conventional recycling “bring sites”.

The amount of waste recycled, and therefore diverted from landfill, through the scheme rose from over 30 tonnes in the first three months of the trial to around 90 tonnes over the 6 months.

Target

The Council and our partner organisation, Cae Post, have recently secured further funding amounting to £165,000 allowing the scheme to be rolled out to 30,000 households in the Llanidloes, Newtown and Llandrindod Wells areas, as well as expanding the scheme in Welshpool to 5000 households.

Progress

Adopt a Recycling Facility

Over the past three years, the Council has developed a policy of establishing partnerships with local community groups and the voluntary sector at Council Recycling “bring sites”. Groups are encouraged to adopt a local “bring site” and take on the responsibility for supervising, cleaning and promoting the site. In return, groups receive a payment of £19.00 per tonne of household waste collected at the site. Of the 31 sites which were advertised as “Adopt a Sites” 27 have so far been taken up by local groups, with recent adoptions in Talgarth, Brecon and Crickhowell bringing the total to 7 in Brecknockshire, 4 in Radnorshire and 16 in Montgomeryshire.

Targets

As part of the strategy the Authority has set ambitious targets for waste management and recycling:

Table 14: Local Performance Indicators Waste Management

Ref	Local Performance Indicator	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2004/05
E 1.1	Increase the amount of household waste composted at home	56%	60%		65%
E1.2	Number of Composting Units sold	80	100		

E 1.3	Number of Households per Bring Site	1200		1000	
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Table 15: Local Performance Indicators Waste Management

Ref	Local Performance Indicator	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2004/05
E 1.4	Number of Recycling Bring sites	58	60		
E 1.5	Joint Community Recycling Schemes	69	74		
E 1.7	Number of Landfill sites	1	0		

Progress

Powys Energy Agency

The Powys Energy Agency was established in June 2000, with a remit to promote and facilitate the rational use of energy and the development of appropriately scaled Renewable Energy projects across the County.

Target

adopted for period 2000 -10:

- 5000 sq m of Solar Water Heaters;
- 20 new hydro schemes;
- 2 schools heated by woodfuel;
- 2 woodfuel district heating schemes;
- 50 individual homes heated through wood log, chip or pellets;
- 2 other large non-domestic woodfuel heating schemes;
- 3 new Anaerobic Digestion plants. Progress Green Technology

The Dyfi Eco-Valley Community Energy Project has completed 11 projects, consisting of photovoltaics, woodfuel and solar water heating. Two more are almost complete, and a number of ambitious schemes are at the design stage, including two community wind turbines and two hydro schemes in addition to more PV and solar schemes. Of particular interest is an ambitious whole-roof PV scheme on a housing association development in Machynlleth.

KEY ACTION

The Council will create, maintain and enhance the built environment in a way which is in harmony with the natural environment.

In order to support this key action the Council has achieved the following:

■worked in partnership with local groups to enhance the physical environment

Progress

The Promenade, Brecon

Improvement works have been carried out at The Promenade, Brecon which include improved landscaping and the replacement of street furniture with a more appealing and contemporary design. This scheme is part of a longer term project to extend visitor interest along the promenade section of the river in Brecon and thus improving visitor numbers to the Town. Detailed plans have been drawn up that have received a favourable public response after appropriate consultation. Further funding is now being sought to progress the project. The cost of the works undertaken to date amount to £36,000.

The Rock Park, Llandrindod Wells

The Rock Park in Llandrindod Wells has received investment in Woodland Management during the past year. The Park is of local and regional historical interest but has fallen into disrepair over many years. Work is also progressing with a local Friends Group to explore the possibility of Lottery Funding towards major improvements. The cost of the works undertaken to date amount to £6,000.

The Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells

The Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells is undergoing external refurbishment to address long standing water penetration problems. The Pavilion is a major Mid Wales Conference Centre attracting conferences and meetings from throughout Wales and England. Once water penetration problems have been addressed it is intended to improve the internal fabric especially those areas damaged by water ingress. The cost of the works involved amount to £90,000.

Ystradgynlais Sports Centre

The Ystradgynlais Sports Centre has had a major overhaul of its reception and social areas during the year. This work has included the extension of the reception area and modernisation of social facilities. Customers are now able to enjoy refreshments in a much more pleasant environment which in turn encourages increased use

and longer stays by all the family. The new customer friendly layout has brought this much used and highly valued local facility up to date with current user expectations. The cost of the works involved amount to £71,000.

Brecon Leisure Centre

This major regional Centre has installed a new heating and ventilation system in the swimming pool hall at a cost of £90,000. The new system will improve environmental conditions for swimmers as well as significantly reducing heating and energy costs. The benefits to users, the environment and council tax payer will start straight away and the total cost of the works will be recovered within 6-7 years of the installation.

Target:

To establish Town Managers in all major towns by 2005
Frontage improvement schemes extended to all major towns by 2010

One new community transport scheme provided each year

- **encouraged a cleaner environment and waste reduction**

The Council operates a dog warden service throughout Powys, and currently employs three full-time Dog Wardens and three relief Wardens. In 2001/02, it is proposed to concentrate Warden patrols on those areas of Powys where most complaints are received, and to further develop the emphasis on raising public awareness about the anti-social impact of dog fouling through a variety of community based and educational activities. While the Council will also look to prosecute irresponsible dog owners where it has sufficient evidence to do so, we think that a more proactive, educational approach will prove to be more successful in the longer term.

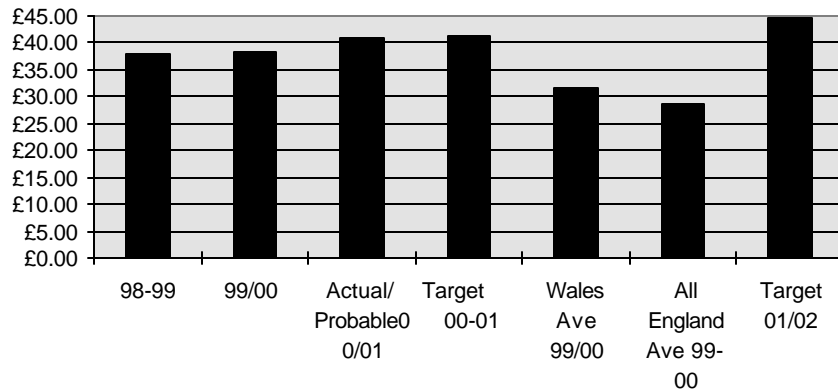
The Council received 284 complaints about dog fouling in 2000/01, compared with 229 in 1999/2000. Three prosecutions were commenced in 2000/01 of which one was successful.

Progress

Waste Collection

The net cost per household of refuse collection has fluctuated around the Welsh and Welsh/English average and has drawn closer to it in more recent years. It is anticipated that there will be a slight increase in the average household cost for 2001/2002 taking into account such inflationary pressures as staff costs and household growth.

BV 86 - Cost of Waste Collection per Household

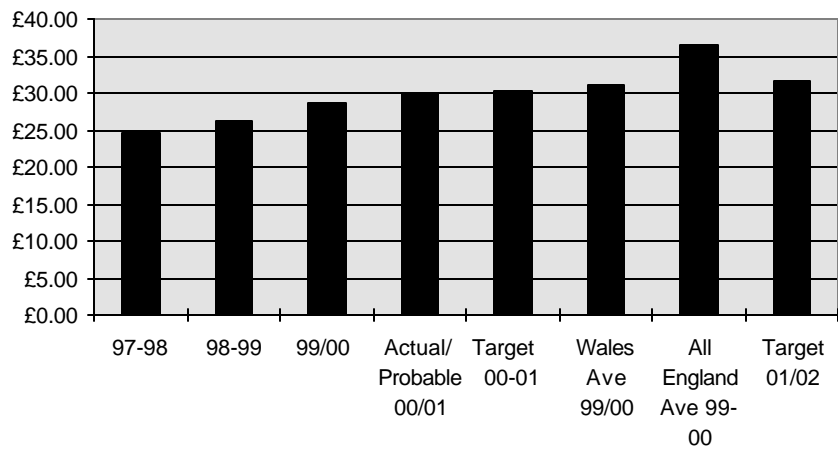


Progress

Waste Disposal

The net cost of waste disposal in 1999/00 was slightly below the Welsh average and well below the English average for the same period. Since 1998/99 waste disposal costs in Powys have risen at the rate of inflation and it is likely that disposal costs will still be broadly in-line with the Welsh average in the current year, with a target set accordingly.

BV 87 Cost of waste disposal per tonne of municipal waste (This definition has changed from 99-00 to 00-01, - from net cost per h/h waste received to municipal waste)



Progress

Street cleaning

Net spending per head of population on street cleaning is less than the Welsh and English averages. The rural nature of the County means that any comparisons with other Authorities against these averages should be viewed with caution. This indicator is no longer collected as a National Indicator, however, the Council has resolved to continue to collect this information and set targets as a Local Indicator to enable comparison over time to be shown.

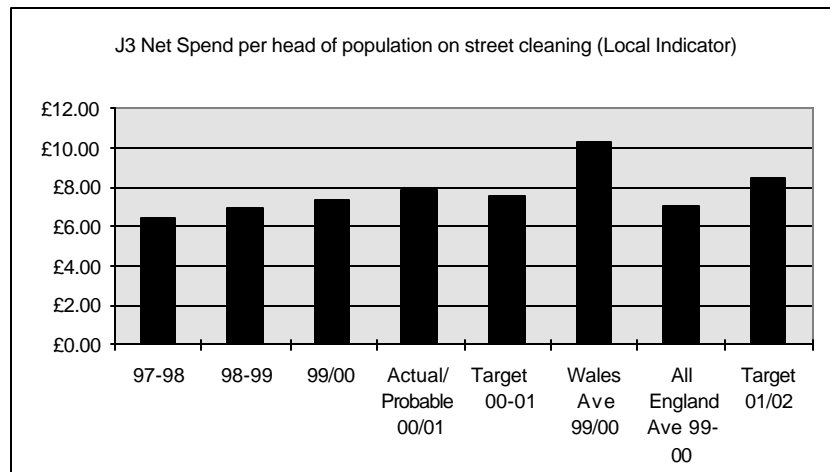


Table 16: Local Performance Indicators - Environment

Ref	Local Performance Indicators Environment	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
	Environmental Health			
E 1.8	Number of complaints and service enquiries (excluding bulk refuse requests)	8,230	10,172	11,656
E 1.9	Percentage of complaints dealt with within target	86	87	90
E 1.10	Number of bulk refuse collections from domestic properties	12,556	13,204	13,500
E 1.11	Number of domestic properties receiving refuse collection service	56,129	57,409	57,697
E 1.12	Number of cemeteries managed	16	17	17

E 1.13	Number of burials	252	292	310
E1.14	Number of stray dogs collected	386	528	460

Table 17 cont. : Local Performance Indicators - Environment

Ref	Local Performance Indicators Environment	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
E1.15	Number of licences/registrations/permits issued	1,714	1,832	1,850
E1.16	Number of registered food premises	2,119	1,892	2,000
E1.17	Visits to high and medium risk premises as % of those that should have been carried out			
	High risk %	67.1	70	80
	Medium risk %	54	53	75
Trading Standards				
E1.18	Number of visits to high and medium risk premises	477	429	510
E1.19	Visits to high and medium risk premises as % of those that should have been carried out	60	55	65
E1.20	Number of food standards inspections (1999)	556	569	600
E 1.21	Number of licences issued	359	343	345
E1.22	Number of prosecutions	27	28	30
E1.23	Number of consumer complaints and enquiries received	3,270	3,062	3,000
E 1.28	Total area of Common Land (ha)	75,516	75,516	75,516

The Council will also:

- **mitigate the hazards of closed landfill sites, contaminated and derelict land**

Target:

Number of Pollution enforcement cases pursued
 To undertake an additional audit of landfill sites by 2001
 Establish a Unitary Development Plan by 2004

- **improved, maintained and managed the transportation**

infrastructure

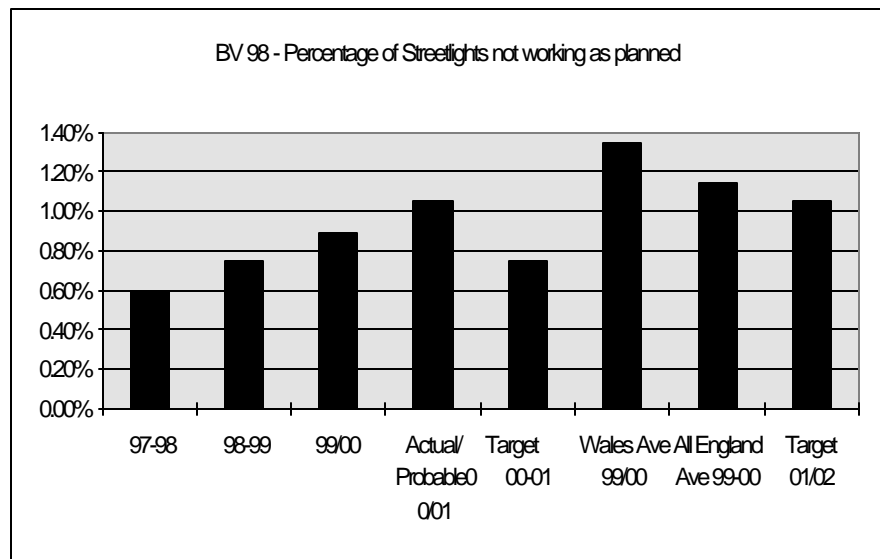
Progress

Town Strategies

In August 2000, the Council published its Local Transport Strategy following a comprehensive consultation programme. Included within that strategy are the planned proposals for integrated transport improvements for a number of towns within the county, including Brecon, Builth Wells, Llandrindod Wells and Newtown.

REF	Local Performance Indicators	1999/ 00	2000/ 01	2001/ 02
E2.6	Number of Car Parks	31	51	52
E2.7	Total Capacity of Car Parks	4141	4355	4402
E2.8	Number of subsidised Bus Routes	39	42	42

In terms of maintaining Streetlights, the Authority is performing well when compared to that of the Welsh and English averages although the figure has risen slightly from that reported in 99/00. This increase is partly due to greater accuracy in reporting outages which no longer include trunk road lights in the calculation. If this method was applied to the 99/00 return this would be 1.04% thereby showing that the actual increase is negligible.



- **sought to ensure that there is harmony between new build and the environment**

Progress

The level of expenditure on planning and land searches has remained fairly constant over the years and is well above the Welsh and English averages. This is explained largely by the sparsely settled geography of Powys which generates few large-fee planning applications and causes any operation involving site inspections and meetings to incur higher staff costs, which are not offset by higher fees. Approximately a fifth of the county lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park, and this too imposes an administrative cost not offset by planning fees.

REF	Description	99/00	00/01	01/02	Comments
		Actual	Actual	Target	
BV 109	Planning Applications Determined within 8 weeks	84%	71%	73%	The definition changed which has had the effect that performance appears to have fallen to 71% from 84%. The 1999/00 figure for all applications was 72% so a small drop has been recorded, though not significant.
BV 108	The number of advertised departures from the Statutory Plan, approved by the Authority	9	20	1%	After five years of constant improvement, it is disappointing to record that the number of permitted departures from the statutory plan has risen to 20. This more than doubling of the approval rate is due to a significant increase in the approval rate for Montgomeryshire, which accounted for 75% of the approved departures
	Number of Planning applications determined	1600	1595	Not appropriate	

9. Financial Management

9.1 Financial Plan and Financial Inputs

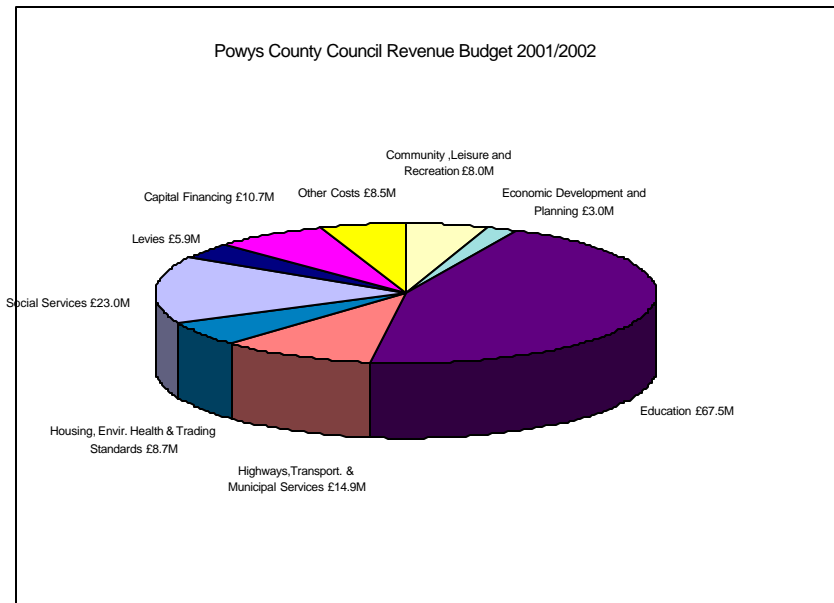
The County Council's financial plan is in two parts- the Revenue Budget and the Capital Budget. These budgets show the financial inputs for each service and give a broad monetary value for the services the County Council plans to provide.

The budgets are shown here at summary level. Further details may be found in the Council's Budget Book published in April and in the Council's annual statement of accounts which is published after audit in December each year.

9.2 Revenue Budget

The following pie chart and table shows the net expenditure planned to be incurred in 2001/2002 by each of the Council's Committees to provide services and how that expenditure is financed by government tax payers, business ratepayers and local council tax payers.

The impact of these spending plans on the average Band D council tax payer is also shown together with the current and planned level of the County Council's general reserve.



ACTUAL 1999/00 £	<u>SUMMARY OF NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE</u>	ESTIMATE 2000/2001 £	PROBABLE 2000/2001 £	ESTIMATE 2001/2002 £
(306,180)	Agriculture	(316,600)	(316,600)	(322,770)
6,812,670	Community ,Leisure and Recreation	7,378,770	7,378,770	8,046,040
2,477,360	Economic Development and Planning	2,732,960	2,732,960	2,981,600
59,219,709	Education	63,348,400	63,348,400	67,477,245
13,682,520	Highways,Transport. & Municipal Services	14,002,050	14,002,050	14,931,050
7,813,681	Housing, Envir. Health & Trading Standards	8,163,000	8,163,000	8,663,470
20,251,990	Social Services	21,519,740	21,519,740	22,920,650
	Strategy & Resources :			
5,236,028	- Levies	5,539,070	5,565,210	5,936,860
10,676,265	- Capital Financing	11,751,290	10,916,000	10,722,290
8,215,693	- Other	7,836,480	8,343,210	8,554,010
	Other Costs (to be allocated)			372,005
134,079,736	Total Committee Requirements	141,955,160	141,652,740	150,282,450
494,905	Contribution to/(from) Specific Reserves			
429,304	Contribution to/(from) General Reserves	(29,950)	272,470	(58,880)
135,003,945	NET EXPENDITURE	141,925,210	141,925,210	150,223,570
87,077,043	Revenue Support Grant	91,235,021	91,235,021	95,482,735
25,294,898	Redistributed Non Domestic Rates	25,546,459	25,546,459	27,427,649
22,632,004	Local Council Taxpayers	25,143,730	25,143,730	27,313,186
135,003,945		141,925,210	141,925,210	150,223,570
		£	£	
456.07	Council Tax for a Band D Property	519.91	519.91	560.21
0.00	Less Council Tax Reduction Scheme	0.00	0.00	0.00
456.07		519.91	519.91	560.21
	Number of Equivalent Band D			
47,784.34	Properties	48361.61	48361.61	48755.22
	<u>GENERAL RESERVES</u>			
		£	£	
3,716,864	Opening Balance	3,696,664	4,146,168	4,418,638
429,304	Movement in Year	(29,950)	272,470	(58,880)
4,146,168	Closing Balance	3,666,714	4,418,638	4,359,758

9.3 Capital Budget

The following table shows the capital investment the County Council plans to make in each service for the period 2000/2001 to 2003/2004

Capital Programme 2000/2001 to 2003/2004				
Summary				
	Estimate 2000/01	Estimate 2001/02	Estimate 2002/03	Estimate 2003/04
	£	£	£	£
Service Committee				
Strategy & Resources	1,079,761	666,153	2,046,140	2,054,140
Education	5,020,084	3,345,488	2,294,000	2,294,000
Highways & Transportation	2,050,000	2,185,000	2,010,000	2,010,000
Municipal Services (Amenity)	153,200	236,200	88,200	88,200
Social Services	513,279	363,060	152,060	144,060
Planning & Economic Development	804,787	1,075,000	650,000	350,000
Community, Leisure & Recreation	1,003,600	1,229,000	798,600	798,600
Housing	2,647,450	2,119,900	2,052,000	2,052,000
Environmental Health	6,120,438	5,042,500	5,178,500	4,675,000
Trading Standards	0	13,000	0	0
Probation	30,699	0	0	0
DSO	420,000	420,000	420,000	420,000
	19,843,298	16,695,301	15,689,500	14,886,000
Funding				
General Capital Grant/ Borrowing BCA	13,945,000	14,786,000	14,786,000	14,786,000
Borrowing - SCA	1,681,818	0	0	0
Receipts - Sales of Assets	899,792	33,900	0	0
Grants	2,571,127	1,749,988	803,500	0
Reserves	652,561	100,413	100,000	100,000
Revenue	93,000	25,000	0	0
	19,843,298	16,695,301	15,689,500	14,886,000

9.4 Significant Trading Operations

The following statement shows the nature, turnover and surplus or deficit of significant trading activities for which the County Council maintains separate accounts. The figures in the statement do not fully comply with the total cost principle included in CIPFA's Best Value Accounting Code of Practice.

1999/2000 Outturn		2000/2001 Provisional Outturn		2001/2002 Budget			
Surplus/(Deficit) £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Surplus/(Deficit) £'000	Trading Operation	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Surplus/(Deficit) £'000
External Trading							
25	400	416	(16)	Building Control	350	448	(98)
389	670	343	327	Car Parks	650	495	155
Internal Trading- Direct Services							
24	1,305	1,322	(17)	Grounds Maintenance	1,394	1,394	0
30	3,402	3,380	22	Catering-School and Welfare	3,530	3,499	31
2	349	347	2	Catering-Civic and Other	370	368	2
3	2,727	2,816	(89)	Building Cleaning	3,065	3,052	13
2	1,134	1,182	(48)	Vehicle Maintenance	1,230	1,222	8
(87)	2,656	2,589	67	Building Maintenance	2,743	2,743	0
225	7,328	7,049	279	Highways-General	7,817	7,798	19
734	2,343	1,893	450	Highways-Other Cleaning	2,340	2,004	336
(45)	2,808	2,790	18	Refuse Collection	3,021	3,021	0
15	1,350	1,300	50	School Support Services	1,380	1,340	40
(17)	1,453	1,503	50	Leisure Management	1,550	1,550	0

Losses are anticipated on Grounds, Vehicle Maintenance and Building Cleaning activities for 2000/2001 although final figures are not available at the time of this report. These losses were caused partly by improved staff terms and conditions not being reflected in the charges made to client departments. Partly as a result of increased charges to clients to fully reflect costs it is expected that such losses will not recur in 2001/2002.

The Grounds Maintenance operation requires a certain level of ad hoc work to break even. The latest forecast is that in 2000/2001 the amount of that work did not make the required level.

In the case of Vehicle Maintenance the costs of maintaining some ageing vehicles were not fully reflected in the contract in 2000/2001. This has been remedied in 2001/2002.

In the case of Building Cleaning the projected loss for 2000/2001 is partly due to a loss of clients- in particular two high schools - and increased costs not reflected in charges. Prices have been adjusted in 2001/2002 and measures are being taken to prevent further loss of business.

The Building Control projection for 2001/2002 is deemed to be a pessimistic forecast of building control activity which fluctuates from year to year. This account is expected to break even over three

years as required.

Table 18: Local Performance Indicator - Financial Health

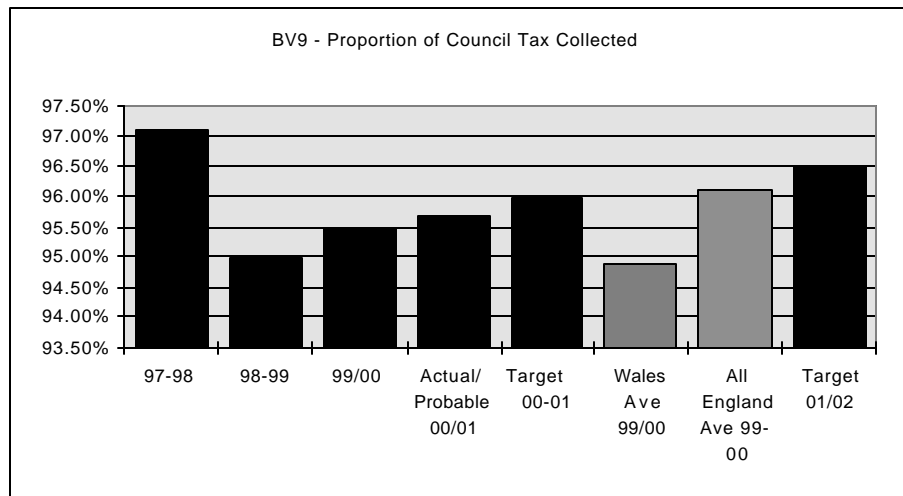
Ref	Local Performance Indicator	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
SD2.1	Level of the Councils General reserve	£4.1m	£3.7m	£4.4m
SD2.2	Council Tax for a Band D Property levied by the County Council for its own services	£456.07	£519.91	£560.21

Progress

Collecting Local Taxes

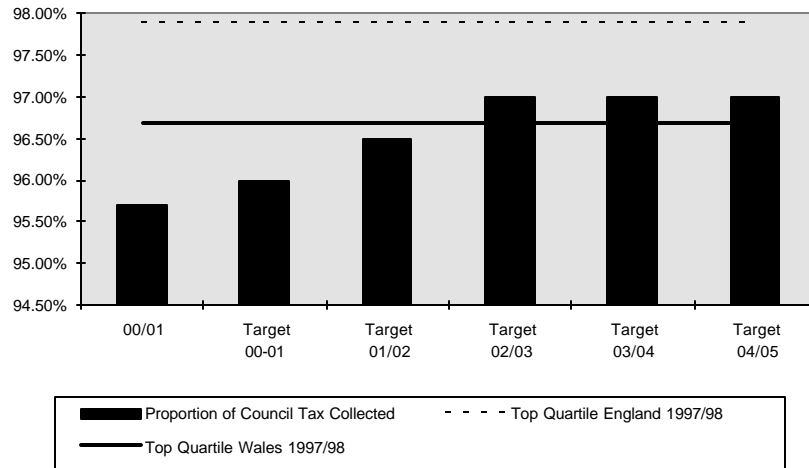
A steady increase in the collection rate for Council Tax has been maintained despite the difficulties of a high increase in the charge. The planned recovery schedule for 2001/02 should result in the continuing improvement in collection rate within the top quartile (Wales) performance.

The Council experienced an element of organised resistance to payment of Council Tax in the early months of 2000/01, which although was overcome, affected the collection rate for the year resulting in a shortfall of meeting our target by 0.3%. The Foot and Mouth outbreak is also having an affect on some peoples ability to pay the charge and this will make the target for 2001/02 of 96.5% difficult to achieve. However this remains our set target.



It can be seen in the graph below that steady improvement to the collection of council tax has been maintained, with the performance by

the Council looking to fall within the specified top quartile range for Welsh Authorities by 2002/03.

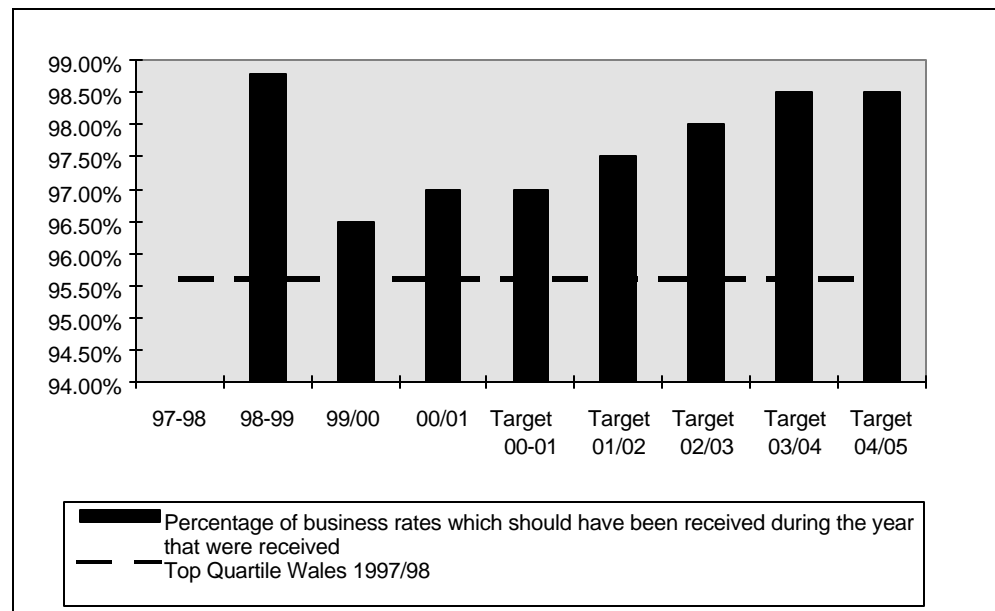


Progress

Percentage of Business Rates Collected

The following graph shows the performance of the County Council in relation to the top quartile target for the collection of business rates. Although the target has been achieved, the Authority aims to ensure continuous improvement over the next five years.

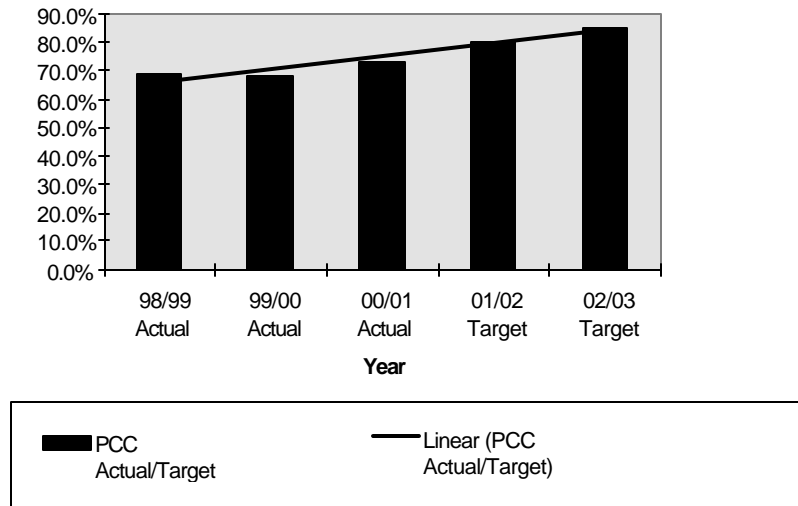
BVPI 10 NAW PI 1.8 Percentage of business rates collected



(NB. This is based on our best estimate on the figures available, and

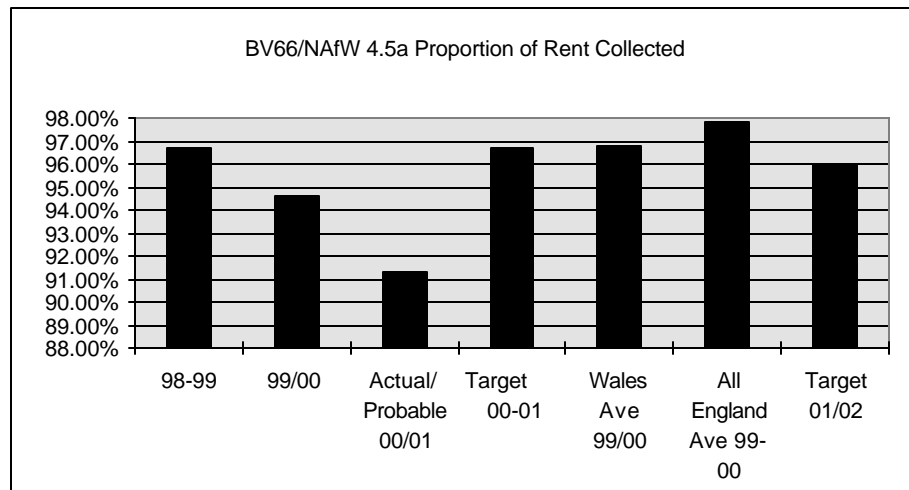
will be subject to Audit Commission guidance in due course.)

BVPI 8 NAWPI 1.6 Prompt Payment of Invoices Performance



Powys' figures are based on invoices paid within 30 days. The late payments include disputed invoices. A gradual improvement is being achieved and the use of internal league tables is intended to accelerate the improvement. Analysis processes continue to identify delays and preventative measures. The National Assembly's Target is 95%, 97.5% and 100% for 00/01, 01/02 and 02/03 respectively. The Council average falls short of the NAWPI target but is progressing towards it. In 1999/2000 the Welsh Average was 75% compared with the Council's 68%.

9.5 Rent collection



The graph depicts the probable figure for proportion of rent collected and not the actual for 2000/01, which is anticipated to be approximately 95%, and thus nearer the target set.

As the subject of a best value service review completed in 2001 a number of recommendations have been made in order to improve the rent collection and arrears recovery service, see Section 10. These include a number of options to restructure the rent collection service over the next 5 years to enhance service delivery for tenants and improve collection rates for the Authority.

10. Completed Best Value Reviews

During the first year of Best Value – 2000/01, the Council undertook to review 25 services, in accordance with the review programme detailed within the Performance Plan 2000/01. Although the majority of these were specific service areas within Departments, 2 were joint reviews involving more than one Department and a further 2 were cross cutting; cutting through Departmental boundaries and looking at the delivery of services by the Council as a whole. These two cross-cutting reviews were Community Safety and Public Interface.

Of the total number of reviews, 11 have been signed off by the Council with the remaining 14 being scheduled for reporting to their relevant service committee in the near future. The cancellation of service committees due to the Foot and Mouth crisis has had an inevitable impact upon the approval process for completed reviews.

Table 19: Review Approval Programme

Completed Reviews:	Reviews awaiting Approval and Adoption:
Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages	IT Desktop Support
Rent Collection & Arrears Recovery	Corporate Health & Safety
Home Renovation Grants	Legal Services
Car Parking	Transport Management & Vehicle Maintenance
Amenity Services, Incl Markets, Bus Shelters, Public Conveniences and Street Cleansing	Laboratory Services
Workspace Management	Development Control
Community Safety	Equipment & Adaptations
	Day & Employment Services for People with Learning Difficulties
	Social Services - Duty & Emergency
	Day Centres for Older People
	Services for Looked After Children - Extended to Year 2
	Public Interface
	Building Repairs & Maintenance
	Annual Revenue Grants - Extended to Year 2
	Numeracy
	Welsh Education Scheme & Welsh Medium Services
	LA21
	Waste Management

Three of the completed reviews, Car Parking, Community Safety and Amenity Services have been subjected to inspection by the Best Value Inspectorate and we are currently awaiting judgement on these.

The results from the completed reviews, including a summary of performance, results from consultation and key actions for improvement, can be found below.

The results of the remaining reviews will be reported in future Performance Plans.

Community Safety

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

The duty upon the Council with regard to Community Safety has resulted in the formation of a Partnership to develop a Strategy which aims to reduce Crime and Disorder within the County. Powys has the lowest Crime figures for England and Wales. Dyfed Powys Police have been praised by the HMI for the highest detection rate for crime; currently 7 out of 10 reported crimes being detected. Community Safety has been concerned with :

- developing the Community Safety Strategy in line with other plans;
- setting up task groups and monitoring progress ;
- co-ordinating and strengthening of the Partnership

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The Powys Community Safety Partnership has begun to establish the framework to effect reductions in Crime and Disorder. The role of the County Council is to support and lead the Partnership. Further work is needed to

- make links with other policy initiatives across the range of social policy
- analyse the pattern of crime and disorder
- communicate with the public

These issues have been included within the Review's Action Plan for implementation from April 2001.

Consult - What did you say ?

Consultation concerning Community Safety issues has been carried out with different groups over the recent years, with key findings derived as follows :

- Top priorities for Community Councils - foot patrols and speeding / road safety
- Customer focus group of 800 (2000 / 01)
 - tackling drugs (45%)
 - crime prevention (42%)
 - foot panel (40%)
 - Crime Act (35%)
- Police run consultation every 2 years but the latest round is not yet available. This will include information about the fear of crime and disorder.
- Discussions with voluntary organisations about how they are involved in the community safety partnership.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

The duty to Community Safety is a new core responsibility of the County Council, and at present alternative provision is not available. The review concluded the recommended way forward to strengthen the Partnership's capacity to respond to the Government's expectations of Partnerships.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

During 2000, the Community Safety Partnership will undertake a further audit of crime and disorder, and a new three-year strategy will be agreed in 2002.

- In addition to those actions already identified the Partnership will Review the relationship between Community Safety and other strategies, and how they might contribute to the reduction of Crime and Disorder
- Pursue issues of Domestic Violence and Racially aggravated crime as part of a wider policy agenda.
- Clarify the contribution of partners to the Partnership and to new initiatives.
- Take advantage of new funding opportunities - particularly in terms of action against drugs.

Workspace Management

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

The provision of 19 workshops, supporting a variety of primarily manufacturing businesses, at various locations across the County is one of the key actions that bring about an improvement in local economic performance and creation of new jobs.

The Council currently supports over 370 FT jobs in some of the most rural parts of Powys, and aims to increase this level to over 390 during 2001 / 2002.

In the absence of Private Sector provision of Units and WDA provision of smaller units in rural areas - the Council offers a vital route for local economic regeneration.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

A recent condition survey of village workshops identifies that in some cases substantial investment is needed to improve the fabric of the premises, and therefore safeguard future service provision. Funds are being sought to enable these repairs in addition to routine repairs and maintenance to be implemented. A target to reduce the number of premises in need of substantial maintenance from 26% to 16% has been set for 2001/02.

It has been determined that opportunities may exist at some locations to dispose of assets to tenants or release land for other uses which could possibly be used to match Objective 2 funds in the immediate future. The Council is to devise a policy for sale of sites to tenants by September 2001.

Consult - What did you say?

During the course of the review each workshop tenant was consulted over the level of service they received. 85% of those questioned were satisfied with both the workshops and the support service provided. This can be reinforced by the statistics for length of tenancy, with the majority of tenants (46%) occupying units between 2 - 5 years and over a quarter, 26% continuing tenancy over 10 years.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

There is no statutory obligation to provide workspace, however, in the absence of interested alternative service providers in the locality the Council recognises the service as fundamentally important in the supporting of community economic development.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

As a result of the review, a number of actions have been identified and will be implemented;
 Preparation of a Maintenance Schedule by March 2002
 Devise policy for sale of sites to tenants by Sept 2001
 Give further consideration to the future development of a comprehensive workspace programme, which will require significant input, from both Council and other lead agencies.

Off Street Parking

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

Over the past five years the Authority has given emphasis to the standardisation of car parking procedures across the County. A number of cost effective measures have been introduced including:

- Standardisation of ticket machines
- A Departmental structure able to manage Off Street parking, Residents Permits and On Street parking requirements
- Pilot schemes in Welshpool and Brecon of hand held data capture devices used for issuing excess charge notices and updating the car park management system
- A programme of introducing charging at additional Council car parks throughout the County
- In June 2000 proposals were agreed to harmonise season ticket prices in Brecknock & Montgomeryshire through a 3 year programme of increments which will equalise charging policies. This has brought prices into balance with demand and closer to those charged in neighbouring authorities.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The service is self-financing and produces surplus income to support other local amenity services. However, there was a shortfall in the projected income for the current year, due in part to the siting of new supermarkets offering free parking within Brecon and Welshpool town centres.

Through a variety of measures including improved enforcement of parking orders for non payment of car park use and introduction of charges in some free car parks, the Council aims to increase the daily turnover per charged space from £2.36 in 1999/00 to £2.75 in 2001/02.

Consult – What did you say?

The results explained the public perception of the service and allowed the review to eliminate a number of recommendations for which there was little support e.g. the need for a 2 shire season ticket and the provision of CCTV monitoring in car parks. 83% of the people asked supported the active pursuit of people who fail to pay and display and 79% of residents are generally satisfied with the quality of the service.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

Early indications of competitiveness have shown the Council to be providing a cost effective service. The service improvements identified as a result of the review aim to increase service effectiveness and efficiency. However, the Council will continue to monitor future options with regard to external partners to ensure the best possible service can be delivered.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

A total of 25 action points to be implemented over the next three years, were identified by the review and are detailed in the action plan.

In summary, these range from management issues such as internal communications, accounting procedures, local performance indicators and seeking partnership agreements with others, to service improvements including the introduction of an All Powys Season Ticket, improved signing and a review of the charging structure.

Amenity Services - Street Cleansing

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

Although the net spend per head of population on the Street Cleansing service in Powys is below the average for other Council's in Wales, it achieves a high level of cleanliness compared to those other Authorities. In 1999, the Tidy Britain Group assessed Powys in a cleanliness standards survey, which ranked the County as the second best in Wales.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

Wishing to maintain its position with regard to cleanliness standards against those of the Tidy Britain Group, the council has set targets to increase its assessment score by 5 point within 5 years.

The council also recognises the distress that dog fouling can cause across the County. To help combat the problem, Members of the County Councils have been actively encouraged to report incidents of fouling. As a result it aims to increase the number of cautions and legal actions taken for dog fouling by 1% per annum for five years.

Consult - What did you say?

In a council wide survey undertaken in the Autumn 2000, 68% of residents expressed satisfaction with the level of cleanliness standards across the County.

This survey was augmented by a smaller survey involving members of the public who visited Radnorshire. Of those surveyed, 73% were satisfied with the service and many were in favour of prosecuting owners for dog fouling.

Front line staff had also suggested that particular cleans could be rescheduled to enable busier town centres to be given extra attention as necessary.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

The review determined that the service is effectively managed within the resources and constraints available and is delivered competitively. However, it has been recommended that the existing structural arrangements be considered in line with the forthcoming organisational restructuring in order to effect further efficiencies.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

It was determined during the review that the public should be made more aware of the environmental effects of litter dropping and placing refuse bags on the street well in advance of programmed refuse collection, and a public information campaign is to be developed over the next two years to promote street cleanliness in general.

Other key actions identified include:

An integrated service with the management and the operations of the service undertaken in house within one single department is developed

The provision of additional litter bins in Brecknockshire and Radnorshire

The prosecution of irresponsible dog owners for dog fouling be actively pursued

Undertake a programme of consultation with key stakeholders at three yearly intervals

Amenity Services - Public Conveniences

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

Following the merge with the District Authorities during Local Government Reorganisation, Powys inherited a large number of public conveniences and maintains 90 in total, of which 3 are staffed. In comparison with other Welsh Authorities, Powys also has the highest number of facilities that are accessible to disabled people and the number of baby changing facilities available is on a par with the median for Wales and, through an agreed programme, is steadily increasing.

However it is acknowledged that the fabric of the buildings at a number of locations across the County requires attention, and although a programme of refurbishment is being developed this is dependant upon funding for improvements being secured.

The cleaning and minor maintenance services are currently provided under contract by Powys Direct Services, with the overall management of the service being the responsibility of the Highways, Transport & Property Department.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

It has been recognised that the high levels of cleanliness demanded by the Council and the public is not always achieved. To redress this situation the Council is currently considering the use of static cleaning operatives where appropriate, as well as employing mobile cleaning/ minor maintenance operatives to service isolated facilities and provide support to static operatives. It is considered that the high number of facilities currently maintained by the Council is unjustifiable, therefore a programme of rationalisation will be put forward for wide consultation. The savings gained from a reduced stock will go to ensure the level of service is improved in the retained facilities.

These measures will go towards increasing customer satisfaction, with the level of cleanliness, which the Council aims to increase from 75% to 80% by 2006.

Consult - What did you say?

Some of the biggest concerns expressed by visitors to, and residents of, the county was they felt that cleanliness standards of the public conveniences were poor, and that there was poor provision of hot water. This is indeed a concern of the Council's and steps are being made to improve cleanliness and draw up a programme of works to provide hot water where possible. The Council has set itself a time-scale of 3 years to fulfil its aims.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

Through comparison with similar rural Welsh Authorities, and an apparent lack of interest in the service by the private sector, the review concluded that the provision of the public convenience service within Powys was competitive. However, it is acknowledged that improvements can be made through an integration of the service departments, and a framework for delivery of the service is to be drawn up subject to the forthcoming committee and departmental restructuring.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

A number of recommendations were established as a result of this review with the following, in addition to those detailed above, being considered important to ensure the successful programme of improvement to the service:

Give consideration to the methodology for a rationalisation of the service, and on approval, consult with stakeholders.

Continue to provide disabled access to facilities where reasonably possible, to complete by 2004.

Consider extending use of attendants at busier urban facilities to reduce threat of vandalism and improve cleanliness standards .

Amenity Service - Market Services

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

In respect of produce markets, the Council is the Market Authority having gained the status through successive Local Government Re-organisation in 1974 and 1996. The Authority currently administers 10 markets, although 3 are not directly run by the Authority. All 10 are leased, to Auctioneers with the Authority acting as Landlord.

Both produce Markets and Livestock markets provide an income to the Authority as well as providing a source of local employment.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

Although the Markets element of the Amenity Services review is submitted as a stage 1 report it is generally considered that produce markets are well run and that traders and customers are generally happy with the service, although in the majority they are in decline. It is acknowledged that the fabric of the Market Halls require attention and that efforts must be made to regenerate interest in produce markets.

It is recognised that Livestock markets fulfil a need in a predominantly rural county. It is acknowledged that apart from the newly constructed market in Brecon, the facilities are generally run down and whilst the markets meet current legislation with regard to the welfare of animals, it is possible that future legislation may introduce measures that will require considerable capital investment to meet the required standard.

Consult - What did you say?

It was evident from the public consultation that most market shoppers had been coming to the market for more than 5 years. Only 6% were newly introduced to the market. 71% felt that the market environment was pleasant, although most felt that markets were generally in decline.

Recommendations to concentrate on the regeneration of Powys produce markets as well as an advertising campaign etc. is included within the action plan for improvement.

Similar trends were shown in trader responses. 80% had been trading more than five years, with most trading more than once a week. Generally traders thought that the market environment was pleasant.

Initial consultation at Livestock markets showed that the majority depended on their local market to sell more than half their stock, 50% confirmed that they regularly shop at the town whilst visiting the market to trade.

70% said that they did not wish the Authority to dispose of its interest in Livestock markets in the future. The review recommends the development of a policy underlining that Livestock markets have a strategic position in market towns.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

Benchmarking data on both produce and market services has been actively sought by the Authority with little success. As a result it has not been possible to assess the competitiveness of the service at this stage. However the Authority hopes to be in receipt of comparative data in the near future to allow an assessment to be made. The review recommends that a benchmarking exercise be undertaken with peer group authorities with immediate effect.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

A number of recommendations were established as a result of the review with the following, in addition to those mentioned above, being considered important to the successful programme of improvements to the service:

Establish a framework of charges for both indoor and on street produce markets.

Introduce a programme of agreed regular inspections, document visits and actions arising.(Produce and Livestock)

Develop a policy within which the management of leasing should review usage of Livestock market sites against other potential uses for the asset and endeavour to transfer operational costs to auctioneers through renegotiations of lease agreements in the future.

Amenity Services - Bus Shelters

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

Although there is no statutory duty on the Authority to provide bus shelters, they Authority provides them to encourage use of local bus services in line with the aims of the Traffic Reduction Act and the Authority’s Local Transport Plan in addition to contributing to the safety and security of passengers using public transport.

The introduction of the Rural Bus Grant has allowed the Authority to purchase additional shelters and with the Transport bill, having now received Royal Assent, there is an opportunity for the Authority to play a major role in bus shelter provision as part of establishing quality bus partnerships.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

Whilst it is reported that there is a need for bus shelters to encourage the use of public transport, the review recognises that there is merit in bus shelters being provided and maintained locally by Town/ Community Councils and recommends that wide consultation be used to further research this option.

Since the majority of shelters were inherited through re-organisation, the review recognises that variable standards of shelter exist throughout the County. As a result it is recommended that a quality standard should be implemented as an integral part of reviewing Council policy. In line with this aim the Authority aims to improve three sub standard bus shelters with priority being given to shelters identified at most in need of major work.

Consult - What did you say?

From face to face interviews undertaken with a sample of bus passengers, 97% were in favour of having bus shelters and 51% felt that bus shelters did encourage people to use public transport.

Most people felt that existing bus shelters are of an adequate size although there was an even split between what was thought to be important in the actual design of the shelter.

Developing a specification for future standards aim to incorporate passengers opinions.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

Although Powys spends about an average amount per bus shelter when comparing with other Authorities in Wales, consideration should be given to the adoption of a standard design, ranking procedures and written policy to establish itself as a leading authority.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

A number of recommendations were established as a result of the review with the following, in addition to those detailed above, being considered important to the successful programme of improvements to the service:

Monthly inspections of Powys owned bus shelters by either the Highways inspectors or the Cleaning and Associated Works contractors

Establish standard designs of bus shelters relevant to rural, urban and conservation areas

Amenity Services - Town Clocks

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

The Authority inherited the maintenance of four Town Clocks through Local Government re-organisation in 1996. The budget is minimal which results in restricted levels of maintenance and should major refurbishment works be required this will entail a considerable drain on Shire funds.

The service is discretionary with no statutory duty to either provide or maintain Town clocks.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The clocks are all wound by private individuals to whom the Authority pays a retainer, either directly or via the Town Council. Only one clock has stopped through lack of winding since 1996.

Consult - What did you say?

69% of respondents felt that Town clocks provide a useful purpose. Furthermore 69% were of the opinion that they should be retained. The highest majority was found in Radnorshire (77%)

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option

Recommended

The Authority has already identified some funds for capital investment in the four town clocks that are presently maintained. On the completion of investment and the upgrading or making safe the clock buildings, the Authority should pursue the option of transferring responsibility for the operation of Town clocks to the relevant local Communities with tapered financial support.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

The following action points are considered important to the delivery of the service in the future:

Continue to monitor costs of maintenance

Transfer maintenance and daily operation of town clocks to town/ communities

Collate and monitor local performance indicators for the service.

Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

There are presently 6305 Local Authority houses in Powys of which 3255 are in Brecknockshire and Radnorshire and 3050 are in Montgomeryshire. The Council also leases approximately 2000 garages throughout the County for vehicle storage.

The current methods of data collection vary across the Shires with a Rent Collector service available in Montgomeryshire and limited Post Office payment facility, whereas Brecknockshire does not provide a Rent Collection service but offers a Post Office payment option that is widely used. Tenants living in Radnorshire may take advantage of a Water Rates Collection Service offered by the Council.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The review identified that Powys is:

- Broadly in line with other Local Authorities in terms of policies and procedures for Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery, and
- generally performs well in comparison with 94.62% of rent collected as proportion of rent due in 1999/00.

- **TARGET: to collect 96.66% 2000/01**

It was acknowledged that by extending the methods of payment options to tenants the cost effectiveness of the service could be improved:

- **TARGET: Introduce Direct Debit with extensive Publicity Campaign to maximise take up from April 1st 2001**

Consult - What did you say?

The results of the tenant consultation showed that:

- Generally, tenants have high levels of satisfaction with the service
- There is some desire to increase the range of payment options
- There is high level of satisfaction with the Rent Collector Service
- Post Offices generally scored higher levels of satisfaction than Area Offices

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

The review highlighted the varying methods of rent collection across the County and recommended that consideration must be given to the future structure of the service. At the time of the review, the alternative service providers were unable to provide comparable costs for service delivery therefore improvements to service delivery have been developed on the premise that the service be provided in-house.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

The Best Value Review identified the following actions were necessary to ensure improvements were made to the Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery service:

- Implement a time recording system in line with CIPFA Best Value recommendations to allow true comparisons of service delivery costs to be evaluated by April 2001
- Standardise payment options available to tenants throughout the whole of Powys
- Agree Rent Arrears targets on a County-Wide basis and develop local performance indicators in consultation with tenants and staff by April 2001

Housing Renovation Grants

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

The Council is committed to making full use of housing stock by bringing empty homes back into use through home renovation grants and by developing strategies for tackling the problem of empty properties in both the public and private sector. It distributes over £4 million annually in the form of Housing Renovation Grants to support improvements to the private sector housing stock and reduce levels of unfitness.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The review consulted the Welsh Housing Statistics for 1999 and concluded that:

- Powys is within the top third of Wales in terms of number of renovation grants approved and
- expended fully its allocated budget within the period.

The average time of 55 days to determine a grant application is well within the 6 month Government time limit, although that does vary across the County.

TARGETS:

% of mandatory disabled facilities grants approved within 28 days of receipt of full application	100%
Percentage of home repair assistance approved within 28 days of receipt of full application	100%
Percentage of renovation grants approved within 42 days of receipt of full application	100%

Consult - What did you say ?

The majority of respondents surveyed favoured

- targeting of grants at older or vulnerable people living in unfit housing, and
 - targeting resources at security and energy efficiency works
- However, they were less unanimous in their support for a points based system which had recently been agreed by the Council.

As a result the review indicated that the points scheme should be looked at as part of an ongoing consultation with the public and monitoring of the effectiveness of the new grants policy.

Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended

Despite the lack of comparative information on the cost of service provision available from other authorities the review concluded that the grants service in Powys is competitive, as:

- Powys is in the top third of all Welsh Authorities in relation to the number and value of renovation grants approved and completed.
- The rate of unfitness of housing in Powys is just below the Welsh average
- The level of service provided by the Council's Grant Agency in relation to fees charges is shown to be competitive with the private sector.

Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services

The review concluded that although provided competitively a number of measures should be implemented to the in-house provision to ensure economic, efficient and effective improvements are realised:

- Review funding arrangements for Care and Repair Agencies and move to a formula based system, linked to performance. Complete by September 2002
- Improve the information given to grant clients about the services provided by internal and external agents by September 2002
- Benchmark the grant service, to be completed by September 2003
- Harmonise grant procedures for all three Shires and incorporate agreed service standards within the procedures by March 2002.

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages

Description of Service - Areas of Strength

The Powys Registration Service is responsible for providing a facility throughout the County to enable the public to register all births, deaths and marriages occurring within its boundaries, and does so through the provision of 11 Registration Offices and 2 outstations over 8 registration areas.

How is it performing and what are the targets for the future?

The service is currently provided to the public from a number of premises located across the County.

Although the majority of these are owned by the Council it is noticeable that the rental charges for these premises exceeds the amounts paid in proportion to private rentals. It is proposed to consider the issue of property and rentals in the light of the Asset Management Review carried out recently by the District Audit Service and subject to a Best Value Service Review by the Council in 2001/02.

During 1999/00 568 births were recorded, 693 declarations of birth, 1166 deaths, 4 declarations of

Consult - What did you say?

Generally, service users who responded to the survey felt that the service offered was enhanced by the Registration Staff who were seen to be polite, efficient and helpful. Negative comments reflected minor issues which nevertheless are important and need consideration and concern:

- Hours of access to service

<p>death and 408 marriages at Register Offices, Approved Premises and Registered Buildings.</p>	<p>Environment issues such as standard of premises and availability of car parking.</p>
<p>Summary of Service Delivery Options Considered and Option Recommended</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to provide the Registration Service and as such will retain the service in-house, however, improvements to the way in which the service can be provided have been considered through the review. The review will give consideration to all the recommendations contained in the LG.A. Guidelines for the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages and where appropriate will seek to implement these within 12 months.</p>	
<p>Key Actions to Deliver Improved Services</p> <p>In addition to the recommendations referred to above, the review concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sub districts of Welshpool and Llanfyllin and the sub districts of Llanidloes and Newtown by amalgamated to enable informants to register in either of the respective Register Offices at their convenience. This to be actioned within 12 months subject to General Registrars Office approval • Performance levels should be established and published following consultation with staff within 12 months. 	

11. Statutory Inspection

During the year the Council's Management arrangements were inspected by the District Auditor who also examined whether value for money was being obtained. The actions taken in response to previous inspections by external bodies were also reviewed. The inspection covered the following areas:-

Management arrangements

Best Value
Democratic Renewal

Value for Money

Asset management
Grants to voluntary organisations
Better services for vulnerable older people
Financial decision making in Social Services

Follow-up Reviews

Social Services Joint Review
Community Safety
Planning School Places.

The District Auditor reported his findings in his Management Letter to Members dated 22 December 2000 in which he stated

“The Council continues to respond positively to new initiatives and seeks to achieve value for money in its arrangements. There is still evidence of inconsistency between departments but the adoption of the Corporate Plan should allow for a more focussed approach to service delivery.”

The District Auditor also reported that the Council's general financial position remains sound, although there are some concerns about the performance of the DLO/DSOs, in particular building maintenance. He recommended that Members should continue to monitor performance of loss making DLO/DSOs.

An unqualified opinion was expressed on both the main Statement of Accounts and the Pension Fund accounts and the District Auditor reported that the Council's financial systems are adequate for the purpose for which they are intended.

With regard to the prevention of fraud and corruption he indicated that overall satisfactory arrangements are in place, although there is scope for these to be strengthened, particularly in relation to information technology and telecommunications.

The Council's systems for the collection of a number of performance indicators were found to be unsatisfactory and he recommended that Members must ensure that the progress in improving systems for the production and calculation of performance indicators is maintained.

11.1 SSI Joint Review

Following the Joint Review, the Council produced an Action Plan and the progress made was monitored by the Social Services Inspectorate. The District Auditor contributed to this by feeding back the results of audit work.

Although the District Auditor had concluded that action is being taken to implement a performance management framework throughout the authority, that there have been improvements in budgetary control with Social Services and that the Residential Care Homes contract is working satisfactorily he considered that continued action is required with regard to the collection and monitoring of performance indicators, income collection and the level of outstanding debts.

The Joint Review Team visited the Authority in November 2000 to check on progress with the Action Plan and were satisfied with the progress made although a number of areas were raised as needing to be addressed. This was acknowledged by the Department who have taken particular action in relation to home care costs. This is also highlighted by the bringing forward of the Domiciliary Care Service for review during 2001/02.

The action plan has now been formally "signed-off" by the Joint Review Team although the Social Services Department will still need to monitor progress.

11.2 Community Safety

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a joint responsibility on police forces and local authorities to form statutory crime reduction partnerships with other key agencies such as probation and health authorities, to carry out a local crime audit and draw up a three-year community safety plan.

The partnership arrangements were audited in the previous year by the District Auditor who had concluded that good progress had been made although there remained some challenges in mainstreaming, resourcing and performance management. The early indications from a follow-up study by the District Auditor are that the Partnership is engaging well and has a good understanding of the areas which require development and reinforcement.

The Council plays a lead role in Powys' Community Safety Partnership and during 2000/01 undertook a review of the way in which it carries out its responsibilities with regard to Community Safety. The key findings of the review can be found at Section 10.

11.3 Grant to Voluntary and other External Organisations.

Most local authorities are committed to supporting voluntary organisations through their powers to award financial grants. The Council spends just over £2 million annually on funding service partners in the voluntary sector and other external organisations, as well as providing support "in kind", including staff time.

This was an area which was subject to an audit during 2000, which focussed on the existing arrangements in the County with a view to ensuring that the Council's strategic aims were being achieved and the recipient organisations receive equitable and consistent treatment. The results of the study were considered by an Officer group and it was recommended that from the 2002/03 financial year:

- all the various grant budgets should be brought together into an annual cycle (with a

small reserve for urgent items)

- there should be a unified process for awarding and monitoring grants,
- a more corporate approach to documentation and publicity should be adopted
- consideration would be given to outsourcing grant administration activities, and
- a further review of the various trust funds would be undertaken.

In addition to this audit, the Council commenced a review of Annual Revenue Grants as part of its Best Value Review Programme, and in the light of the recommendations, and the forthcoming organisational restructuring the Council is to expand the scope of the Best Value Review to cover all Grants made to the Voluntary Sector. The completion of this review will be by the end of March 2002.

11.4 Best Value Performance Plan

Following the publication of its first Best Value Performance Plan, for 2000/01, the Council was pleased to receive an unqualified opinion from the District Audit which reflected that it had complied in all significant respects with the statutory requirements.

However, a number of statutory recommendations were made and the Authority was able to respond to these positively. A summary of the Council's response to those recommendations can be found in Appendix A.

11.5 Best Value Inspections

To date the Council has submitted three of its Best Value Reviews to the Best Value Inspectorate; Community Safety, Car Parking and Amenity Services, and is currently awaiting judgement on these.

12. Planned Best Value Review Programme

Reaching the end of the first year of the service review programme, we have taken the opportunity to learn from both our experiences and renewed guidance from the Audit Commission and District Audit concerning the number of service reviews scheduled, to revisit our programme for the next four years.

The review programme has also been influenced by the forthcoming political and organisational restructuring and the bringing forward of reviews for services which are considered to be performing poorly. This prioritisation of reviews has been built upon the original selection criteria which paid heed to the impact the service has upon the public and the significance of the budget.

Table 20: Service Reviews Brought Forward to Year 2

REVIEW AREA	COMMENTS
Valuations and Asset Register	Link with Asset Management (plans)
Asset Management (plans)	Link With Valuations & Asset Register
Tourist Information	In response to the recent economic difficulties facing the Council, as a result of the Foot and Mouth Crisis. TIC's through provision of effective information to tourist are critical ingredient of tourism as a whole.
Community Mental Health Teams	Brought forward as a result of a recent Joint Review - Inspection indicating further improvements could be made in this area.
Domiciliary Care Service	Given priority in recognition of District Audit recommendations for improvement
Grants to the Voluntary Sector	Review will be undertaken to incorporate findings of BVR of Annual Revenue Grants and District Audit recommendations.

Where it has been feasible, two or more service areas have been combined, effecting a reduction in the total number of reviews by almost a quarter. Also where strands of two disparate services are known to have an impact on a

particular group of service users, then an explicit link has been formed, for example Sheltered Housing and Domiciliary Care.

It is important that reviews are focussed on outcomes and not so much on the function. In this respect the Council has formulated a programme of cross cutting reviews which provide a vehicle by which the quality of a service to any individual, or group, is improved as a whole and not just concentrated in one particular area.

Review Area	Reason for the Review
Procurement	The way in which the County Council procures its goods and services is fundamental to its efficient operation. As the spending on externally sourced goods and services represents a significant proportion of the Council's overall budget it essential that this is given priority.
Asset Management	The management of the Council property portfolio is another fundamental aspect contributing the efficient running of the Council's operations. The District Audit report "Hot Property" has also determined the prioritisation of this review.
Concurrent Functions	This review will embrace the functions which are provided concurrently with the Town and Community Services.
Young People's Services	Focussing on services for young people and social inclusion, and will include involvement of the Community Leisure & Recreation, Social Services and Education Department.

Future cross cutting reviews will cover Passenger Transport, Community Planning and the way in which the Council tackles Poverty in the County.

The experiences gained following this first year of Best Value have also provided a good opportunity to re-evaluate the process and to build on best practice. During November and December 2000, a number of staff from each department attended training to become EFQM (European Foundation of Quality Management) Assessors. As Assessors they will apply a structured analysis to all the council's services

to assure improvements.

Resources for Best Value Reviews

Departmental Chief Officers have the responsibility to ensure that sufficient resources, including staff time, are provided to carry out the reviews in accordance with the agreed timetable. A budget held corporately will be available to assist in the co-ordination and funding of appropriate activities such as consultation, benchmarking etc.

Each of the fundamental service reviews will be undertaken by discrete teams of officers under the leadership of named Review Team Leaders who will ensure that the Review Team has, or has access to, relevant key skills including process mapping, benchmarking, project planning and consultation processes.

In order to ensure that a consistent approach is undertaken when conducting service reviews, corporate guidance has been issued. This guidance, which will be reviewed and improved as the Council's experience in undertaking Best Value Reviews develops.

A structured approach will be applied to reviews with regular assessments of progress against key milestones dates being undertaken and reported to the Budget & Review Sub Committee (Best Value). Although every effort will be employed as stated to achieve predetermined deadlines the process of restructuring could detrimentally effect progress during the year.

The full programme of reviews commencing 2001 and due for completion by 31st March 2002, can be found at Appendix E.

13. Consultation

13.1 Consultation - Residents Survey

During September, 2000 the Council undertook a consultation exercise with its residents to establish satisfaction levels concerning a number of service areas. The opportunity to replenish and revive the citizens panel was also taken at this time, with respondents invited to be included in future consultations if desired.

Questionnaires were distributed to every household within the County (56,000) as part of a joint mailing exercise with the Electoral Registration Forms, thus reducing the overall mailing costs.

To ensure that the public were informed of the purpose of the questionnaire and to encourage a good response rate to both this and the Electoral Registration Forms a publicity campaign was undertaken, including the press, radio and poster distribution.

The response was overwhelming with over 19,000 responses being returned to the Council, during September and October.

The following table shows the satisfaction levels for each of the prescribed performance indicators in accordance with the National Assembly Direction 15/2000.

Performance Indicator	Residents who expressed Satisfaction	Residents who expressed Dis - satisfaction	Total No of Respondents
BVPI 3 The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the Authority	57.02%	14.14%	16779
BVPI 4 The percentage of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints	37.35%	52.96%	4131
BVPI 89 The percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standards	69.45%	11.97%	16045
BVPI 90 The percentage of people expressing satisfaction with			
a) Recycling facilities	67.88%	13.24%	18236
b) Household Waste Collection	90.38%	3.11%	18740
c) Civic Amenity Sites	54.89%	8.95%	6793
BVPI 103 The percentage of users satisfied with the local provision of public transport information			
Overall:	22.26%	34.11%	15092
Have Seen Information:	44.73%	23.75%	4876
Have Not Seen Information:	10.78%	40.16%	9630
BVPI 104 The percentage of Users satisfied with local bus services			
Overall:	26.82%	29.77%	16803
Have used Service:	46.69%	35.97%	6687
Have Not Used Service:	13.69%	25.67%	10116
BVPI 119 The percentage of residents by targeted group satisfied with the local Authority's cultural and recreational activities	57.31%	5.18%	16814
Percentage of Women respondents satisfied with cultural & related facilities:	59.40%	8.33%	9012
Percentage of minority ethnic community respondents satisfied with cultural & related facilities:	57.29%	7.29%	80

It is noted that the residents are generally satisfied with the overall service provided by the Authority, however, there are concerns that those who had contacted the Council with a complaint were not satisfied with the way in which that complaint was handled.

This is an issue which was confirmed through the Public Interface Service Review and a number of measures are to be put in place to ensure improvements are achieved in this area, which in addition to developing a revised Customer Care Programme, include standardising the internal recording, monitoring and complaints procedures.

Benefits Survey

BVPI 80	August Survey	January Survey
<u>Overall Satisfaction</u>	<u>Strongly agree/agree</u>	<u>strongly agree/agree</u>
A - Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office	68.08%	78.91%
B - Overall I am satisfied with the service in the actual office	73.62%	83.88%
C - Overall I am satisfied with the staff with the telephone service	75.79%	77.99%
D - Overall I am satisfied with the staff in the Benefits Office	79.04%	83.87%
E - Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understandability of the forms, leaflets and letters	56.69%	61.71%
F- Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took them to tell me whether my claim was successful	53.66%	69.20%
<u>Successful Claimants</u>		
A - Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office	64.79%	70.28%
B - Overall I am satisfied with the service in the	62.70%	76.72%

actual office		
BVPI 80	August Survey	January Survey
<u>Successful Claimants</u>	<u>Strongly agree/agree</u>	<u>strongly agree/agree</u>
C - Overall I am satisfied with the staff with the telephone service	65.53%	67.66%
D - Overall I am satisfied with the staff in the Benefits Office	67.44%	74.78%
E - Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understandibility of the forms, leaflets and letters	49.00%	56.76%
F - Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took them to tell me whether my claim was successful	48.47%	65.73%
<u>Unsuccessful Claimants</u>		
A - Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office	3.29%	8.63%
B - Overall I am satisfied with the service in the actual office	10.92%	7.16%
C - Overall I am satisfied with the staff with the telephone service	10.26%	10.33%
D - Overall I am satisfied with the staff in the Benefits Office	11.60%	9.09%
E - Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understandibility of the forms, leaflets and letters	7.69%	4.95%
F - Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took them to tell me whether my claim was successful	5.19%	3.47%

It is pleasing to see that the major efforts to improve the performance in the benefits section has been reflected in a much higher satisfaction rating in January, 2001 compared with August,

2000.

The difficulties faced in the Montgomeryshire benefits section have been fully addressed and the satisfaction rating is good throughout the County.

As expected, there is a higher satisfaction rating for successful claimants compared with those who's claims were unsuccessful.

13.2 Best Value Service Reviews

Wide ranging consultation was undertaken during the review process as detailed in Appendix C, and in Section 10 above.

13.3 Consultation Strategy 2001/02

Consultation will continue to address service specific topics but will also inform the strategic direction of the Authority in line with the modernising agenda, and will be carried out in accordance with the Council's approved Consultation Strategy, using the following consultation methods:

- Service Specific Questionnaires
- Citizens Panel
- Public Meetings
- Service User Forums
- Focus Groups

13.4 Citizens Panel and General Consultations

Incorporated within the questionnaire was an option for residents to indicate their interest in future Council consultations. This was affirmed by over 6000 residents, from the total 19,000 responses. A full profile analysis of these residents has been undertaken to determine compatibility with the County's demographic profile. This analysis provided essential information to be taken into account when considering involvement of these residents in future consultations.

It is envisaged that the panel will be used for general consultation on service delivery through the service review process as well as for

consultations on specific strategic developments, eg the Local Transport Plan, UDP, etc.

The following table identifies a number of planned consultation exercises which are due to be undertaken during 2001/02. Where possible the means of consultation have been identified.

13.5 Planned Consultation 2001/02

13.5.1 Service Specific Consultation

Consultation Area	Methodology
Political Restructuring	Wide ranging consultation in accordance with the National Assembly Guidelines
LTP Update	Views to be sought on specific issues to be included in update e.g. Powered Two Wheelers
Transport Grant	Consultation will be required to support TG bids to be submitted with LTP
Waste Management	Surveys to be conducted on household composting to measure progress against Government targets, and kerbside collection prior to extension of the pilot scheme
Scheme Specific	Scheme specific consultation and Public Transport routes consultation to be carried out as and when required

13.5.2 Best Value Reviews

Consultation Area	Methodology
Highways Maintenance	Wide ranging consultation to be undertaken during June/July to inform the Best Value review of this service. It is planned that focus groups and questionnaires will form the basis for this consultation
Off Street Parking	Additional consultation aimed at tourists and transport operators to supplement consultation carried out for review in 2000/01
Markets	Additional consultation to gain views of groups representing Agriculture and individual towns as identified in review 2000/01
Procurement	Questionnaires and Interviews undertaken, involving staff and other public bodies
Emergency Planning	Questionnaires and focus groups involving staff and Emergency Services

Best Value Reviews cont. ...

Consultation Area	Methodology
Personnel Services	Questionnaires and structured interviews with Clients, Staff and Unions.
Special Educational Needs	Questionnaires and focus groups with specific service users and key stakeholders
New Technologies	Questionnaires and focus groups with specific service users and key stakeholders
Cemeteries	Questionnaires distributed to stakeholders and Focus Groups.
Homelessness and Housing Advice	Questionnaires to staff, other departments and service users.
Sheltered Housing	Questionnaires and focus groups will be undertaken with key stakeholders. Also throughout the review the bodies representing Housing Tenants interests will be consulted.
Tourist Information	Questionnaire distributed to service users; customers and trade user & structured interviews.
Care Management	Questionnaires and focus groups with specific service users
Services for Looked After Children	Residential Weekend with service users, questionnaires and focus groups with key stakeholders
Domiciliary Care	Questionnaires and focus groups with specific service users
Concurrent Functions	Consultation with Community Councils via "road shows meeting".
Asset Management	Structured interviews staff and elected members and public bodies.
Young People's Services	Questionnaires and focus groups with service users and key stakeholders
Grants to the Voluntary Sector	Questionnaires and focus groups with service users and key stakeholders

14. Equal Opportunities Statement

WLGA Toolkit Challenge	Powys County Council's Commitment April 2000 - March 2001	Progress March 2001	Targets 2001-2
<p>1. To adopt the principle of mainstreaming equalities work into Best Value To take a positive approach to experimenting with equalities work in Best Value.</p>	<p>The Council undertakes to adopt the principle of mainstreaming equalities work into Best Value. It has developed an Equalities Checklist to be undertaken during each Best Value service review</p>	<p>Ongoing use of checklist in reviews</p>	
<p>2. To conduct a first stage equalities audit by the end of March 2000 in readiness for the first full Performance Plan in 2000/01</p>	<p>The Council will have completed its initial Equalities Audit by July 2000</p>	<p>Initial Audit completed through a questionnaire. Issues arising will be addressed through the Equalities Task and Finish Group which has been established to review and updates the Equal Opportunities Policy and Action Plan</p>	<p>Full Equalities Audit by October 2001</p>
<p>3. To produce an equalities action plan by the end of March 2000 To commit to setting equalities targets and performance indicators in the first full Performance Plan using the management information gathered from this first stage equalities audit</p>	<p>The Council will produce a comprehensive Equalities Action Plan by October 2000 Where gaps have already been identified, targets and performance indicators will be set in line with the statutory indicators and the guidance</p>	<p>Work in progress not yet completed.</p>	<p>Revised date for Action plan is now September 2001</p>
<p>4. To adopt the principles of equality in service provision</p>	<p>The Council undertakes to produce a comprehensive published policy to provide services fairly to all sections of the community by March 2001</p>	<p>Equalities Strategy Working Group established to rewrite Policy and develop Strategy in relation to Service Delivery. Policy statement completed.</p>	<p>Revised date for completion of policy and strategy is September 2001</p>

		Strategy in progress	
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5. To adopt the Social Model of disability as a service provider	The County Council has an access Policy and guidelines for staff about working with disabled people. This Policy endorses the social model of disability	No further target set	Access Policy to be reviewed by October 2001
6. To adopt a rolling programme of access works to meet the new duties under the Disability Discrimination Act	<p>The Council has a well-established programme of Disability Equality Training.</p> <p>The Council will undertake to monitor the implementation of the Access Policy, particularly in relation to the production of information, beginning April 2000. This will be done in consultation with local Access Groups.</p> <p>The Council has undertaken to re-audit all of its buildings so that its programme of access works can best meet its new duties under the Disability Discrimination Act Part 3. In line with this commitment it has already organised a programme of training for key staff</p>	<p>Access work continues to be undertaken according to corporate priorities. Three further Disability Equality Training Course run since April. The Council has introduced Tynetalk and published the numbers of its textphones.</p> <p>Training for key staff for re-audit of buildings has been undertaken. 125 buildings have been access audited as a result. 37 Building passed. This has now increased to 40 buildings and will rise to 41 by the end of the year.</p>	<p>A programme of works covering all departments responsible for public buildings to be established and implemented.</p> <p>Deaf Awareness training is being introduced for all reception employees by April/May 2001</p> <p>To review Access Policy by October 2001</p>
7. To build the needs of the minority and disadvantaged groups into customer care strategies	See point 10 In line with the Council's Anti-Poverty strategy, to promote better staff awareness of the needs of these groups	Customer Service Charter now displayed at all service points. Programme of Customer Service training in place	2001-2002 Programme of Customer Service training to be offered to all front line staff
8. To deliver bi-lingual services in accordance with their Welsh Language scheme	The Council has a Customer Service Charter that establishes its commitment to equity in service delivery and bi-lingual services. It will establish a new Programme of	Customer Service Charter now displayed at all service points. Programme of Customer Service training in place	2001-2002 Programme of Customer Service training to be offered to all front line staff

	Customer Service Training by October 2000 to reinforce the principles of the Charter		
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<p>9. To develop a communications strategy for their equal opportunities policy and to include key aspects of this policy in customer charters and other customer information</p>	<p>The Council will work with Community Groups and the newly formed Powys Racial Awareness Project to consult with ethnic minorities</p>	<p>The Council has continued to liase with Powys Racial Awareness Group. It has made an unsuccessful bid of the Home Office for funding to establish a Race Equality Network. However, it continues to look for alternative sources of funding . Initial meeting of key agencies held in May 2001 to establish Racial Equality Network</p>	<p>Work with CRE and key local agencies to develop Racial Equality Network by December 2001</p>
<p>10. To ensure that the Council has a comprehensive employment monitoring system in place which produces equalities management information</p>		<p>The Council continues to work towards updating its equalities monitoring information on staff</p>	
<p>11. To ensure that the Council has a comprehensive recruitment and selection policy in place</p>	<p>Powys County Council has a Code of Practice for Recruitment and Selection which aims to appoint the best people for the job and a mandatory training programme for managers; a process of Staff Review and Development for all staff; a policy to prevent bullying and harassment and a service will allow as much flexibility to staff as the service will allow</p>	<p>Recruitment and Selection Policy revised in November 2000 and Update/refresher training in place by April 2001</p>	<p>Recruitment and selection Update/Refresher training to be made available to all trained managers by April 2002</p>
<p>12. To develop a comprehensive equalities training programme based on the results of a training needs analysis</p>	<p>The Council has introduced a programme of training on Equality of Opportunity in employment and service delivery in its corporate Programme for April 2000 to March 2001 In the financial year April 2000-March</p>	<p>The uptake of this programme has been low. One course has been run to date. Resources have prevented the</p>	<p>Equalities training programme to be reviewed by July 2001 Review of this target to be undertaken by</p>

	2001 the Council will introduce a database to enable it to monitor access to training by gender, ethnic background, age, grade and disability	introduction of training database	October 2001
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13. To review their employment policies and adopt best practice where they have not already done so	All employment policies will be reviewed by July 2000.	All employment policies reviewed by November 2000	Monitor changes in Policy and review the impact of changes by December 2001
14. To keep under review existing and potential initiatives to create a more flexible, supportive, harmonious and family friendly working environment	The Council has a Prevention of Harassment Policy for its staff and from April 2000 will introduce a monitoring system for all cases of harassment notified to the Personnel Division The Council has a range of flexible, family friendly working policies that are constantly under review	A monitoring system for harassment cases has been introduced. Between October 1999 and December 2000. 13 courses on the Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace were run	Monitor Harassment Monitoring Procedure and report on figures to Committee
15. To set a positive action programme with targets and performance indicators	The Council is a recognised "Positive about Disabled People" employer	Further positive action measures under consideration as part of the forthcoming Equalities strategy	To review positive action measures in recruitment advertising by December 2001
16. To develop effective joint working arrangements with Trade Unions to work in partnership on equalities issues		The UNISON Equalities Officer is a member of the Equal Opportunities Working Group. Partnership courses have been piloted for Return to Learn and Women into Management in 2000-2001	To continue and extend existing programmes
17. To build equalities into all strategic plans, community development and regeneration programmes	Powys County Council already takes a lead role in groups and programmes that address the issues of social exclusion e.g. the Inter-Agency Anti-Poverty Strategy working Group, the Consortium for the Gateway to the New Deal in Powys, the Community Safety Group	No target set	

18. To make a commitment to on-going equalities work and equalities targets in Community Plans	The Community Safety Group undertakes to monitor all cases of racial harassment in line with the recommendations of the Macpherson Report	The Community Safety Group monitors cases of racial harassment in the Community. It has played the lead role in working with the Powys Racial Awareness Group	To address points 18-21 through the new equalities Strategy by September 2001
19. To take a positive approach to working with the public, voluntary business sectors on equalities programmes using the community planning process to exert influence	The County Council will undertake to build equality considerations more systematically into its grant giving processes and the award of contracts	Targets to be set for including equality considerations in conditions of grants and contracts by April 2001	See 18
20. To make full use of community profiles	The Council will undertake to ensure that the full range of social groups, including disadvantaged groups, are consulted during its Best Value review	Evidence available from Best Value Reviews	See 18
21. To develop consultation plans which will help develop internal expertise in working with minority and disadvantaged community groups	The Council is an active member of the Equalities Toolkit network, facilitated by SYNIAD	No target set	See 18
22. To support and participate in equalities networks	The Council will attain Level One of the CRE's Standard for Local Government by March 2001 the Council undertakes, through its Equal Opportunities Member/Officer Working Group to look for more imaginative ways of introducing positive action measures	See above re working with Powys Racial Awareness Group. Work has begun on the CRE Standard but target to attain the Standard at Level 1 not yet met.	Achieve CRE Standard Level 1 by March 2002