Report to: **Executive**

Date: **1 November 2005**

Report of: **Executive Member for Environment & Transport**

Subject: **Environmental Policy: Progress 04/05 and Action Plan 05/06**

Ward: **All**

1.0   Purpose of the Report

1.1   To present a summary of progress against the 2004-05 Environmental Policy Action Plan and to get approval for the new Action Plan for 2005-06 and the suggested internal performance indicators.

2.0   Consultation

The new action plan and the performance indicators have been developed in consultation with all Heads of Service and discussed at Corporate Support Team. All staff named as responsible for particular actions have been consulted with. It has been approved by Management Team on 17 October 2005.

3.0   Background

3.1   In October 2004 the Council adopted its Environmental Policy and this is supported by corporate standards and annual Action Plans to enhance the Council's performance in terms of environmental sustainability.

3.2   The Environmental Policy is strictly concerned with actions relating to the Council's own use of resources. It does not cover the broad sustainable development agenda or the actions the Council takes in terms of delivering environmental services (waste disposal, household recycling etc).

3.3   During May 2005, an audit was completed to assess performance against the Action Plans. This was a self assessment exercise and has not been subject to challenge or spot checking at this stage.

4.0   Performance summary

4.1   There are 14 critical actions in the 2004-5 Action Plan and these cut across all
teams. Performance against these is summarised below:

Critical action	Number of teams complying (from responses received)									
Putting up reminder posters	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Configuring printers to print double sided	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Buying double sided printers when replacing	■	■	■	■	■					
Ensuring financial support for recycled paper	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Cancelling unwanted publications	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Providing recycling facilities eg desktop recyclers	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Critical action	Number of teams complying (from responses received)								
Configuring IT equipment for standby/low energy	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩		
Configuring computers to switch off at 8pm	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	NB action withdrawn			
Last person in office switching things off	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	
Car sharing	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩		
Briefing team on environmental policy	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩		
Compliance checks by Champions / monitoring	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩			
Developing new actions and including them in Service Plan	🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩					

4.2 Comparing these results with the monthly monitoring forms that have been completed by the Environmental Champions from teams shows that the actual performance of teams mirrors the achievement of actions outlined above. Altogether 28 forms had been returned with some Champions returning a form each month and others none at all.

According to the monitoring forms received, staff performance of environmental actions can be listed in the following order. The scores are purely calculated from the returned forms, therefore actual performance across the whole of the Council is likely to be less than indicated in the table.

Action	Score (out of 100)
Recycle paper	87
Set up computers for low energy	78
Switch lights and equipment off at night	74
Don't use new envelopes internally	70
Use e-mail rather than paper	70
Print double sided	70
Photocopy double sided	67
Have access to duplex printers	64
Share cars to meetings	64
Set up computers to print double sided	33

4.3 A small number of additional actions have been carried out by some individuals
or teams.

4.4 Overall, the Council has started to move towards better internal environmental
management. Simple actions are being carried out by the majority of staff. However, a significant number of either Heads of Service or Champions did not respond to monitoring requests, indicating that they may not find it an integral and important part of their work.

4.5 There is a great variation in commitment and performance between teams. Some teams perform significantly better than others. The Regeneration & Partnerships Unit, for example, was chosen as the exemplar team, with which the Sustainability Officer worked, to demonstrate that excellent performance

can be achieved by raising awareness, combined with a system of reminder stickers and 'fines' and the commitment of the Head of Service.

4.6 The action points that were most neglected were the ones directly related to actions by the Head of Service/Manager, such as briefing the team and new staff members, making monitoring part of service delivery monitoring and developing new actions within the service plans.

4.7 As stated in the original report to Executive when the Environmental Policy was approved, progress would be slow and focus on basic actions only if no dedicated officer was appointed to work with individual teams. It appears that this is true.

5. Future actions

5.1 A draft action plan was drawn up by the Sustainability Officer and then discussed at Corporate Support Team. The revised action plan was then taken to Management Team for approval. This is attached at Appendix 2.

5.2 Very few teams had come up with suggestions for new actions; however, the suggested actions in the draft plan were accepted by Heads of Service at the workshop held during the Corporate Support Team meeting.

5.3 The new action plan is based on the old one with a small number of additional actions, for example, to recycle our printer cartridges, mobile phones, cans and jars; to use glasses rather than plastic cups where feasible; to phase out the water bottle coolers and install flash coolers in kitchens; to roll out actions relating to sustainable procurement and others.

6. Corporate Performance Indicators

6.1 To measure our environmental performance across the Council, a set of environmental indicators will be measured and a small number chosen as local PIs. These will be included in the corporate basket of local PIs that will be developed as part of the revised performance Management Framework. The proposed indicators and PIs are attached in Appendix C.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

This report has no immediate financial implications. Some of the actions require funding, which will be met from existing budgets, and others will result in future savings. It is suggested that the Council reinvests some of the savings that can be achieved by good environmental management into furthering its objectives under the Environmental Policy in the future.

7.2 Legal Implications

This report has no direct legal implications

7.3 Policy Implications

This report covers actions to deliver the Environment Policy.

7.4 Risk Implications

A risk assessment has been carried out.

8   Communications

The new action plan will be communicated to all staff as well as to Scrutiny Management Board and Service Delivery Scrutiny Board.

9   Corporate Implications

9.1   Corporate Plan and Priorities

The actions referred to in this report represent the Council's own organisational contribution to delivering corporate priority SFE4; to ensure the corporate health of the Council through sound and prudent environmental management; and CTC2: to improve, protect and sustain the natural environment by reducing waste, increasing recycling, protecting wildlife and conserving resources.

9.2   Service Plans

Actions included in this report will be built into Service Plans

9.3   Performance Management and Scrutiny

This report presents the year-end position in terms of the Council's performance during 2004/5 and introduces a new set of actions and performance indicators.
Heads of Service are asked to report their environmental performance within their quarterly reports to Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee. The standards of performance measured are:

- Seek to monitor 100% of the service unit at least twice during each quarter (done through the Environmental Champions' monitoring spot checks)
- Reduce the number of instances where the monitoring check finds non-compliance with the environmental standards
- Implement service specific actions of the Environmental Policy Action Plan where the Service Unit takes the lead

Additional information is reported annually at the end of each financial year.

9.4   Sustainability

The report is concerned with the Council's own actions around environmental management, which is a cornerstone of sustainable development.

9.5   Human Resource Implications

There are HR implications in so far as staff time has to be allocated to carry out the proposed actions. Since we do not have a dedicated Environmental Management Officer, tasks will have to be covered by existing staff or consultants.

9.6   Information Technology

The action plan makes reference to the E-government programme.

9.7   Procurement

Several of the proposed actions for 2005/6 are around changing procurement practices in line with the Environmental Procurement Policy and Guide. The Procurement Manager has been consulted and involved in this.

10   Recommendations

Executive is recommended to:

10.1   Note the year end performance of the Council against its environmental action plan.

10.2   Endorse the new action plan and the proposed local PIs in Appendix 1 and 2.

Background Papers

- Environmental Policy
- Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan 2005/6

Appendices

Appendix 1   Environmental Policy Action Plan & Standards 2005-2006

Appendix 2   Internal Environmental Performance Indicators