



Performance Monitoring Report

for

Corporate Services Department

2nd quarter 2007/08

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Iain McCracken
Director: Alison Sanders

Section One: Executive Summary

This is the second Corporate Services' Performance Monitoring Report for 2007/08. The report focuses on the progress made by the Department during the second three months of this year from July to the end of September 2007 against the objectives, actions and performance targets set out in the Department's Service Plan 2007/08.

I would like to draw attention to the following highlights from the first quarter:

- Consultation work on the Community Cohesion Strategy is now complete and the results are being analysed.
- The Draft Race Equality Scheme has been prepared and agreed for consultation.
- Completion and costing of many of the work-streams and business cases required for the new Civic Centre. The initial designs for the new Council Chamber have now been consulted on and agreed.
- Continuing support for the Town Centre regeneration project, particularly in respect of Legal and Property Management.
- Continuing to implement the Customer Contact Strategy in particular developing the programme of work for the next three years. The current year's programme includes telephony, customer self-service and grounds maintenance.
- The Customer Relationship Management contract is interlinked with the Corporate Customer Contact Strategy which has been endorsed by CMT on the 5 September 07 and the members Customer Contact Monitoring group on the 27 September 07.
- Considerable progress has been made on the project to transfer the housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes. Corporate Services are co-ordinating this project across the Council.
- Finalisation of the Code of Conduct for Members and officers following changes to the statutory model code. Training delivered on this for Members. The interim inspection for the Members' charter was very positive and our direction of travel has been approved.
- Preparations are underway for the 2008/09 budget and beyond with a range of projects identified under the 'Balancing the Budget' programme to address the forecast budget gap of £6.2m over the next 3 years.
- The latest budget monitoring report was submitted to CMT in September and projected an overspend of £0.6m in 2007/08. This is a significant improvement on the position being reported at this time last year and indicates that many of the overspends identified in 2006/07 have been largely addressed either through the budget build process 2007/08 or changes to service provision.
- Completion of access audits in all Council buildings in order to inform a programme of improvements for disabled customers and staff. We have achieved 35.7% accessibility in our buildings and the audits have allowed us to plan to increase this to over 50% within a year.
- The Partnership Toolkit has been approved by CMT. A review of existing partnerships against the Toolkit will commence shortly.
- Joint Arrangements to be reviewed by BFBC in consultation with other Berkshire Unitary Authorities. A schedule of Joint Agreements and financial provisions have now been prepared.
- The post of Head of Audit and Risk Management has now been filled although the new post holder will be unable to start work until 2008.
- Improvements to on-line payment software. In the 6 months from April to September 07, there were 15,208 payments online with a total value of £2.1m (in the same period 2006: 13,462 payments online with a total value of £1.8m).

- The new automated speech recognition telephone payment service for council tax payments, available all day everyday, went live on 28 February 07. In the 6 months from April to September 07 there were 1160 payments of council tax with a total value of £171k. This successful project has been the case study for a system supplier, Capita Business Services.
- Increased efficiency achieved by implementing corporate contracts to achieve procurement savings. Including:
 - award of Home to School Transport and taxi contracts agreed by the Executive on 24 July - contracts now implemented;
 - building cleaning contract awarded and due to commence on 1 November. Annual saving of £90,000 anticipated (including 4 schools);
 - banking contract currently being advertised, tenders are due to be returned by 29th October;
 - Heath Lambert appointed as insurance brokers from the 1st October and initial preparation underway for the re-tender of the Council's insurances, which are due for renewal on 1 April 2008.
- Finalising the staffing structures for the unified Learning & Development team, now in a position to fully implement the corporate training programme.
- Significant work, including trades unions discussions to bring those employees currently on local contract conditions into the mainstream of Council terms.
- Continuing to upgrade and modernise recruiting methods, for example online psychometric testing, competence-based interviews.

fitters and the workshop foreman. It is anticipated that servicing and maintenance will be outsourced from February 2008.

- Preparations for the provision of an in-house transport service, transporting pupils from a number of schools to the John Nike centre. The cost will be almost 30% less than the current spend on taxis. The service is due to commence at the end of October.
- The establishment of a project team to implement new routing and scheduling software. The go live date is planned for February 2008



Shows Key actions that are anticipated to be achieved within timetable, or already have been achieved



Shows Key actions that have not been or are not likely to be achieved on time

- £0.014M Loss of rental income due to the Community Mental Health Team vacating office space within Time Square from 19th October.
- Increased costs of members allowances and Independent Review Panel (£0.012M) and early estimate of members training needs (£0.002M) offset by forecast extra income from marriages and ceremonies (-£0.014M).

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- £0.008M Increased costs from an additional member added to the executive.
- £0.015M 2006/07 budget proposals identified a £0.015M saving from replacing the black and white printer. The printer has not yet been replaced as the Invest to Save capital scheme did not prove viable and the budget needs reinstating.
- £0.175M Following the change of external auditors District Audit (the new external auditors) have assessed the audit fees and identified increased risks and therefore more audit fee is required. In addition the previous auditors (KPMG) charged when the work was done, mostly after the end of the financial year but District Audit will charge before the work is done so in 2007/08 there will be some double charges. The CPA inspection costs are also higher than expected.

Capital

Details of the Corporate Services and Chief Executive's Departmental capital programme are reported in Appendix C. The 2007/08 programme for the year is £3.114M. This is £0.030M less than last reported due to the transfer of responsibility for the Young Persons Website Development to ECSL Department.

The approved capital budget for 2007/08 has been re-profiled to more accurately reflect the likely cash spend. The approved budget has therefore been split into a cash budget for 2007/08 which will be used to monitor performance and a cash budget for 2008/09 which represents the anticipated carry forward.

The overall expenditure to date represents 19% of the cash budget with a further 10% committed.

Complaints

Stage	Number of complaints in the quarter	Specific commentary on complaints
1	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amendment to council tax records (not well-founded) - Problem setting up a direct debit to pay council tax - Delay in responding to an e-mail - Council tax arrears passed to the council's bailiff for collection (not well-founded complaint) - Summons for non-payment of council tax not



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Section Four: Forward Look

The following summarises some of the key challenges facing the Department in the third quarter of 2007/08.

- Continue to support the Town Centre regeneration project, particularly with regard to Legal and Property matters.
- Town Centre CPO. Preparations to commence for anticipated public inquiry in March 2008.
- Town Centre Planning Permission. Complete Section 106 for revised planning permission.
- Progress the development of the Council's plans for the design of the new Civic Hub and operational requirements of the future Civic Centre. This includes the requirement for internal space planning and the development of plans for the Council Chamber.
- Continue preparing land disposals as part of the Council's Disinvestment Strategy.
- Continue work to assess risk of fire, asbestos and legionnaires.
- Take forward the Council's Community Cohesion Strategy and Engagement agendas. The consultation on the Community Cohesion Strategy has now been completed and will be used to develop the final strategy.
- Consult on the draft Race Equality Scheme.
- The Neighbourhood Forums and Action Groups will continue in the autumn following review and agreement by the Executive to a revised approach.
- Support and clerk the first round of Neighbourhood Action Groups following the revised approach adopted by the Executive.
- Continue to implement the Customer Contact Strategy.
- CRM system upgrade and the implementation of trees-related query processes.
- Complete business case and installation of self-service capability for FrontLine.
- Calculate the annual tax-base for council tax purposes, which feeds into the budget cycle for 08/09, and the eventual setting of next year's council tax in February 08.
- Merger of management and staff of reception services in Time Square.
- Lead the Council's work in the transfer of the housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes, including the disaggregation of support services.
- Full implementation of the Bracknell Forest Homes staffing structures.
- Continue preparations for stock transfer and the finalisation of Service Level Agreements with Bracknell Forest Homes for those services they would like the Council to continue to provide.
- Convene the Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.
- Complete the review of polling districts and polling places and implementing any change the Council makes.
- Complete the annual canvass.
- Commence the process to transfer Registrars so that they become Local Authority employees.
- Monitor and manage the Council's budget in order to deliver the medium term financial strategy and identifying the risks and financial issues around major



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Council projects (e.g. Town Centre Redevelopment, Waste PFI and Your Homes project).

- Ensure that all work on the 2008/09 budget is complete, so that the Executive can agree the budget for consultation in December.
- Evaluate of tenders for the Council's banking contract.
- Prepare tender documents for the Council's insurances so that an advertisement can be placed during October.
- Achieve further revenue savings by implementing more corporate procurement contracts.
- Progress the refresh of the corporate risk register with support from the Council's insurers.
- Provide legal support at Garth Hill and Brakenhale in connection with proposed new school buildings.
- Continue to support and develop the Council's Rebus (HR), Agresso (Finance), and Modern.Gov (Democratic and Support Services) systems in addition to researching and developing new systems in line with the emerging ICT strategy.
- Complete this year's desk top machine refresh programme.
- Complete installation of virtual machine replacement of servers.
- Complete Storage Area Network replacement.
- Purchase and install hardware for IP Telephony pilot.
- Begin development of detailed ICT Strategy work programme.
- Guide and advise on strategic HR issues relating to the Council's restructuring, following consultation.
- Assist with the disaggregation of support services for the new departments particularly in relation to the HR function.
- Complete of the Workforce Strategy for Adult Care.
- Manage the annual Flexible Benefits process.



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