



Performance Monitoring Report

for

Corporate Services Department

4th quarter 2007/08
January - March 2008

Portfolio holder: Cllr Iain McCracken
Director: Alison Sanders

Transport

The bulk of the work within the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) has centred around two major projects: the implementation of a new software programme and preparation of the transport trial for Social Services. These two projects will both become 'live' in April. The new software will replace an existing home to school package within the ITU but will also have the capability to route and schedule transport journeys therefore making them more efficient. The transport trial, if successful, will lead to the integration of further social services transport within the ITU.

Other activities for the ITU during the quarter include:

- Preparations for the closure of the existing workshop facility in November. One vehicle fitter has now retired and due to the successful set up of Bracknell Forest Homes, 74 vehicles have transferred across. Tender documentation has now been prepared and will be sent out to interested parties in April. Adverts have been run in the local newspapers to generate interest. It is anticipated that this will contribute towards the savings included in the 'Balancing the Budget' programme.
- The in-house service transporting pupils from a number of schools to the John Nike centre has now been running successfully for six months. A second service transporting pupils to Cable and Wireless for ICT training is also running well. Both services have resulted in savings in taxi fares paid by the department and produced a modest income stream for the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU). In addition further one off journeys have been completed for other Departments.
- The ITU has also been involved in the Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit (BPSSU) work on transport services by providing data as requested and through direct participation in the project.
- A programme of driver training has been organised taken place funded by Safed (a Government organisation) with contributions from Corporate Training and Environment and Leisure. This is as part of the commitment to reduce fuel consumption and emissions linked to the Nottingham Agreement.

Invest to Save Bids

On 23 January Corporate Management Team agreed that funding of £106,000 should be released from the Invest to Save budget for the refinancing of the Council's financial information and management system, Agresso. This involves moving from our existing agreement to a new framework agreement negotiated between Agresso and the Office of Government Commerce. To make the change the Council makes a one off payment of £106,000 in return for which the annual maintenance and support charges will reduce by £33,000. In addition to the financial changes the Council will have an unlimited user site licence which will be of particular use when upgrading to Agresso 5.5 with its extended functionality and will also eliminate any potential risks arising from having insufficient individual licences.

Complaints

Stage	Number of complaints in the quarter	Specific commentary on complaints
1	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Council taxpayer received a reminder notice when their payment crossed in the post. Reminder correct at time of issue – complaint not well-founded. 2) The automated telephone payment system for council tax did not allow enough time for the payment to be authorised and the call was automatically truncated even though the payment went through. Corrective action taken by asking the system supplier to extend the time allowed for payment authorisation. 3) 3 x Complaints regarding Customer Care Charter and Service Standards.
2		
3		
Ombudsman		

Internal audit assurances

(Where internal audit carried out with limited or no assurance)

There were no new internal audits carried out with limited or no assurance in the 4th quarter.

Section Four: Forward Look

The following summarises some of the key challenges facing the Department in the first quarter of 2008/09.

Civic Hub & Town Centre

- 1) Continue to support the Town Centre Regeneration project, particularly with regard to Legal and Property matters.
- 2) Support the Chief Executive's Office in addressing the outcome of the CPO inquiry Inspector's report.
- 3) Progress the development of the Council's plans for the design of the new Civic Hub and operational requirements of the future Civic Centre.

Community Cohesion & Equalities

- 1) Gain approval for Community Cohesion Strategy and begin implementation.
- 2) Finalise branding for Community Cohesion and Equalities and externally launch the Community Cohesion Strategy, Race Equality Scheme, Gender Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report.
- 3) Launch new Community Cohesion & Diversity section on the public website.
- 4) Begin mapping of engagement work to inform the refresh of the Engagement Strategy.

Customer Services

- 1) Appointment and induction of the replacement Customer Services Manager, following the departure of the previous manager.
- 2) More services being handled by Customer Services - adult services transport scheme, e+ card, parking fines.
- 3) Cross-training of Customer Services Advisors to allow cover for all receptions and telephone enquiries.
- 4) Council Tax annual billing.

Democratic & Registration Services

- 1) Achieve formal adoption of the Member Development Strategy.
- 2) Complete Personal Development Plans for Members.
- 3) Deliver the Mayor's Civic Reception.
- 4) Induct the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- 5) Prepare for and deliver education appeals for both the primary and secondary admissions round.
- 6) Clerk and support Neighbourhood Action Groups and Chairmen's meetings.
- 7) Review the governance arrangements of the School Admission Forum.
- 8) Hold a ballot for the election of a parent governor representative on Overview and Scrutiny and for two parent governor representatives on the School Admission Forum.
- 9) Implement the new structure and opening times for the Registration Service.
- 10) Commence preparations to move to new governance arrangements for the Registration Service.
- 11) Subject to Ministry of Justice approval, commence data matching of all entries on the electoral register in line with the Government's CORE initiative.
- 12) Respond effectively to Royal Mail changes to postal delivery times.

Finance

- 1) Finalise the 2007/08 accounts before the statutory deadline of 30 June.
- 2) Prepare the Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Council's published accounts.

- 3) Manage the transition to the Council's new insurance provider.
- 4) Develop and begin to implement a programme of risk management training for officers and members.
- 5) Implement new pension arrangements in accordance with the revised Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 6) Progress the closure of the Council's Housing Revenue Account.
- 7) Implement a trial transport project for Social Services clients.

Human Resources

- 1) Continue with issues arising from the Council's re-organisation.
- 2) Complete recruitment of Director post.
- 3) Implement Management Development Strategy.
- 4) Green Travel Plan and staff consultation.
- 5) Implementation of Workforce Planning Management tool.
- 6) Flexible Working Framework.

Corporate Property Services

- 1) Induction of new Chief Building Surveyor.
- 2) Developing the disposal programme 2008/09.
- 3) Assisting with major Education led projects at Garth College & Brakenhale.

ICT Services

- 1) Affecting a swift and seamless transfer of Bracknell Forest Homes staff out of Time Square to new premises.
- 2) Completion of Electronic Document management pilot for HR.
- 3) Successful implementation of underlying technology to support the Integrated Children System project.

Legal

- 1) Preparation of Code of Corporate Governance.
- 2) Commence work on Information Management framework.
- 3) Provision of legal advice in connection with the Garth Hill and possible Leisure outsourcing projects.
- 4) Substantial volume of Trading Standards prosecutions.
- 5) Review arrangements for the Standards Committee in light of regulations issued under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The regulations come into force on 8th May 2008.

