

CORPORATE HEALTH PERFORMANCE

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

12TH FEBRUARY, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To provide an update on the Council's corporate performance in relation to our National and Local Best Value Performance Indicators from 1st April to 30th November, 2003, and to outline proposals to improve reporting arrangements during 2004/2005.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

- THAT (a) performance in relation to the Council's National and Local Corporate Best Value Indicators, from 1st April to 30th November 2003, be noted; and**
- (b) the development of proposals to improve performance monitoring during 2004/2005 also be noted.**

Reasons

1. The Council has developed revised performance monitoring arrangements as outlined in the Comprehensive Performance Self-assessment document submitted to the Audit Commission. The revised arrangements ensure that the Chief Executive's Management Team, the Strategic Monitoring Committee, Scrutiny Committees, and Cabinet are all involved in the performance monitoring process.

Considerations

2. During 2003/2004 corporate performance will be reported to Cabinet at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 monthly intervals in line with the Council's Performance Management Framework.
3. Corporate performance for the 8 month period 1st April 2003 – 30th November 2003 has been reported on an exception basis and only those indicators where there is a variation on the target of at least + or – 10% are highlighted.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Michael, Policy Officer, on (01432) 261823

4. The Head of Performance Management is currently reviewing performance reporting arrangements across the Council and considering examples of best practice from other local authorities, with a view to introducing an improved and a more consistent approach to performance monitoring during 2004/2005.
5. To reflect the move to four main Council meetings, with a fifth Council meeting specifically to deal with the budget, during 2004/2005 the meeting timetable for Scrutiny Committees will be modified to provide for four programmed meetings during the year. Arrangements will be made to ensure that relevant Cabinet members and Scrutiny Chairmen continue to receive regular performance monitoring reports.

Above target performance

6. **The percentage of top 5% of earners that are from black and minority ethnic communities (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 2%, whereas the actual level from 1st April to 30th November 2003 was 3.2%.
7. **Number of recorded complaints, both formal and informal (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 285, whilst the number of complaints recorded for the first 8 months of this year is already up to 273. The high level of recorded complaints reflects improved collection arrangements and a greater focus on customer service issues across the authority.
8. **Percentage of formal complaints resulting in change of practice (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 6%. During the 8 months up to 30 November 2003, 128 formal complaints were received and 10 resulted in a change of practice, resulting a percentage figure of 8%.
9. **Staff mileage (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is to reduce mileage by 1%. Performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003, compared to the same period during 2002, showed a 9% reduction.
10. **Use of public transport by staff (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is to increase expenditure on the use of public transport by 5%. Performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 showed a 38% increase, compared to the same period during 2002.

Areas for Improvement

11. **The number of Housing benefit claimants visited, per 1,000 caseload (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 175 per 1000 caseload. Performance for the 8 months up to 30 November 2003 was 145 per 1000 caseload. This shows an improvement over the performance for the first six months of the year (135 per 1000 caseload). Staffing levels were 30% below the full compliment level up to 30th November 2003. This issue has now been addressed and performance is expected to continue to improve during the remainder of 2003/2004.
12. **Average time for processing new housing benefit claims (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 33 days, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 54 days. This shows an improvement over the performance for the first six months of the year when the average processing time was 56 days. A significant amount of downtime in software systems, the implementation of tax credits and shortages in staffing resources, have all affected performance in this area. These issues have now been addressed and, as a result, it

is anticipated that performance will continue to improve over the remaining 4 months of 2003/2004.

13. **Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance for housing benefit claims (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 9 days, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 12 days. The late notification by the Inland Revenue of working tax and child tax credits entitlements during the early part of the year resulted in a significant amount of additional changes in circumstances to be dealt with by the Benefits Team, compared with the same period last year. The additional changes in circumstances have now been cleared and an improvement in this area is expected during the next monitoring period.
14. **Percentage of housing benefit renewal claims processed on time (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 83%, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 27%. During 2003/2004 staffing resources have been put into dealing with new claims and changes in circumstances at the expense of renewal applications to give priority to those people waiting for benefit. From October 2003, there is no longer a requirement to issue renewal claims to pensioners and this will have a positive impact on performance.
15. **Domestic burglaries per 1000 population (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 8 per 1000 population, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003, suggests that the annual figure will be approximately 12 per 1000. The West Mercia Police Force has established a burglary action plan in order to reduce the number of burglaries. A team of officers has been created that are dedicated to burglary and vehicle crime in support of this strategy. The Division is also working with neighbouring Forces in order to reduce the number of cross-border offenders.
16. **The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator is 100% by 31st March 2004. Performance up to 30th November 2003 was 44%, and this compares with a figure of 42% up to 30th September 2003. There has been little improvement in relation to this indicator, because there has been limited development of the current web site, with the focus of effort being on developing the e-Gateway infrastructure, which will be the main platform for the delivery of electronic services in the future.
17. **The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 100%, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 86%. However, this compares with an outturn performance of 58% for 2002/2003, demonstrating a significant improvement in performance for the current year.
18. **The percentage of Staff Review and Development interviews completed in the previous 12 months (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator is 100%, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 68%. As part of the Council's new Performance Management Framework, it is planned to undertake the majority of Staff Review and Development interviews during March, April and May of each year as part of the annual service planning cycle. It is anticipated that these new arrangements will result in improved performance in relation to this indicator.
19. **The percentage of agreed training plans arising from Staff Review and**

Development interviews (Local Indicator): The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 90%, whilst performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 68%. It is anticipated that the increased emphasis on the Staff Review and Development process, resulting from the implementation of the Council's revised Performance Management Framework, will result in improved performance in relation to this indicator.

20. **Percentage of formal complaints resolved at Complaints Officer level (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 70%. During the 8 months up to 30th November 2003, 128 formal complaints were received and 78 were dealt with at complaints officer level, resulting in percentage figure of 61%. This compares with an outturn figure of 52% for 2002-2003, suggesting that performance is improving in relation to this indicator.
21. **Percentage of employees receiving a corporate induction within 3 months of commencing employment (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 100%. Performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 78%. This compares with an outturn performance for the 12 month period 1st April 2002 to 31st March 2003 of 45%, which demonstrates significant improvement in relation to this indicator.
22. **First Stop INFO customer enquiries resolved within agreed timescales (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 80%, however performance for the 8 months up to 30th November 2003 was 67%. Service level agreements and the procedures for dealing with first stop customer enquiries are currently being reviewed in order to improve response rates.

Risk Management

Failure to review performance and improvement activity would undermine the implementation of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Background Papers

- Herefordshire Council's Performance Management Framework
- Best Value Performance Plan 2003/200