

# Cabinet Member for Corporate, Customer Services and Human Resources and Deputy Leaders Annual Report – Overview & Scrutiny July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010

## Introduction

I'm going to describe the performance highlights and planned actions for my portfolio - Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources. This covers the Directorate of the Deputy Chief Executive (DCX) excluding Information and Communications Technology and Information. Many of the services provided by my Portfolio cover NHS Herefordshire as well as the Council as part of Herefordshire Public Services (HPS). The Annual Report on the Smallholding Estate will be presented to Cabinet in September

## 1 Budgets

The budget for the whole of the DCX directorate in 2009-10 was under-spent by £98k, a creditable performance particularly considering the in year pressures in areas like Legal & Democratic services.

The budget for 2010-11 is summarised in Appendix 1.

## 2 Performance against indicators

I have given the details in Appendix 2 but overall performance was disappointing with only one of the seven indicators – average sickness absence achieving ahead of target. We will need to do better and this year performance improvement will be a key focus within my area and across the Council.

## 3 Feedback from surveys, customers & stakeholders and key points from self assessments, inspections etc

We should never forget that our services exist to support the frontline and in a number of cases are actually the first point of contact between the Council and the public. Thus satisfaction ratings are of great importance to us. Highlights from last year include:

- The corporate programmes team continuing to achieve 80% satisfaction ratings from its customers
- Overall performance for customer services centres against the one stop shop Bench- marking group was relatively high. However, we do less well in the following areas:
  - 'Convenience and accessibility'
  - 'How your enquiry is dealt with',
  - Length of waiting time' and
  - 'Professionalism of staff'

I expect these issues to be addressed through performance management and the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) review.

*Note: data on customer service centre performance can be found at Appendix 3.*

- Achieving the Customer Service Excellence Award again in January 2010. There are improvements to be made in just 4 key areas out of the overall 54. The assessors were particularly impressed with the new Customer Insight Unit and the Business Improvement Technique NVQ projects that have been taking place throughout the year.
- The Council scored 3 out of 4 (improving well) for the first time in the *Managing Performance* category under the now abolished Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

- Surveys of the Research Teams customers, once again shows high levels of satisfaction
- The majority of those who attend the Diversity teams training courses describe them as either as 'excellent' or 'good'.
- Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire released around 1,000 press releases and generated around 4,000 press reports and articles. Over 90% of which are positive or neutral in tone. Herefordshire is well into the top quartile of comparators for the generation of media output.
- Praise from West Mercia Police for the Joint Emergency Planning Unit for facilitating and administering a cohesive and coordinated response to the bad weather this winter
- The DCX's Directorate is more positive or equal to the Council on all but six of the Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) scores.
- Key findings from the annual Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) indicate corporate areas for improvement across HPS to be appraisals, communications and staff engagement
  - 65% of employees say they are kept informed about the council's plans priorities and performance (compared with the local government average of 60 per cent).
  - 62% of employees feel that they are kept informed about how the Council and NHS Herefordshire work together.
  - 55% understanding the vision and 48% knowing the shared values.

#### **4 Key Changes and Achievements April 2009–March 2010**

There were significant changes throughout the year and we know that there is more to come not least through shared services that will have a major impact on my portfolio and across HPS as a whole. So it is particularly good to record the following achievements.

- The joint communications unit reduced costs by 7% in the last financial year while supporting a wide range of change & engagement programmes and social marketing campaigns. These included:
  - the Shaping Our Place consultation (that secured over 5,000 participants);
  - the recycling and waste management strategy (that achieved a three fold recycling rate in the first few weeks),
  - the shared services programme,
  - the 'Better Roads' campaign to improve the county's highways,
  - the Change4Life, Measles Mumps Rubella vaccine, quit smoking and sexual health campaigns,
  - World Class Commissioning and
  - the anti social behaviour communications and marketing strategy.
- The CAA area assessment was very positive with no 'red flags'.
- Good progress continues to be made in delivering key outcomes in the Sustainable Community Strategy
- The Local Area Agreement (LAA) was successfully re-negotiated in early 2010. Some targets were amended to reflect the economic downturn, in particular the impact on people receiving benefits and the supply of affordable homes.
- The successful delivery of a number of major projects by corporate programmes including a new Waste Management Contract and a new 'Out of Hours Service'.
- The progression of the shared services programme with the formal acceptance by Cabinet and NHS Herefordshire's Board of the business case and the preferred model of a joint public/public joint venture company.
- Agreement of the HPS Customer Strategy
- Establishment of the Customer Insight Unit, to provide a single channel through which the views of front-line customers' on services and how they can be improved will feed across HPS.
- The successful incorporation of Highways and Transportation into Customer Services front office.

*Note – performance data for Customer services can be found at Appendix 3*

- The Comprehensive Equality Policy, Race Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality schemes have all been reviewed and approved on time.
- The Herefordshire 100 has been established to help understand the needs and wishes of minority groups.
- The statutory Place Survey has been completed on time, by the Research team.
- A joint Corporate Plan for the Council and NHS Herefordshire has been created.
- The Research Teams launched a new website in January 2010 called *Facts and Figures about Herefordshire* ([www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures)) bringing together information from both the Herefordshire Council and Partnership websites.
- Developing and publishing a new Constitution for the Council. The clarity of functions and greater delegation to officers has been welcomed. Members can now focus on strategic priorities
- Agenda management and forward planning arrangements have been strengthened. A new comprehensive forward planning tool is now in operation.
- The roles of scrutiny are now clearly set out, the recommendations of the recent scrutiny review have now been implemented and scrutiny work programmes now include policy development, performance management and reviews.
- The format of Council and Cabinet meetings have been changed to allow greater transparency of decision making and debate of issues critical to Herefordshire.
- I am pleased with the work of the constitutional review working group and that we were able to reach a cross party consensus on the changes
- The oversight and management of General Election May 2010
- Recruitment of additional solicitors to meet increased workload caused by changes to safeguarding arrangements for children
- The introduction of a single recruitment toolkit and framework which allows the same documentation & processes to be used across the Council and NHS Herefordshire.
- All policy based corporate training, e.g. Recruitment and Selection, Performance Improvement and Change Management, can now accredited through the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM).
- Adult safeguarding training has been further developed in association with the newly created Adult Safeguarding Team.
- The *Leadership Academy* series has highlighted key themes of importance to senior managers across HPS such as Climate change, the Joint Corporate Plan, Citizen Engagement and Public Sector Partnerships
- The *Masterclass* series for all Heads of Service and Service Heads focussed on identifying opportunities for joint working in the achievement of Total Place.
- 100 colleagues in NHS Herefordshire and Council took part in the *Change Champions Transformation Programme* 2009.

## **5 Issues to address in 2010-11**

The current year will bring additional challenges for my Portfolio, both as a provider of corporate support services and also as a key driver of organisational change. The new Deputy Chief Executive is assessing the overall priorities for his Directorate, which will include leadership of the HPS Transformation Programme. This will bring together a range of projects that are crucial to moving forward the integration of HPS, increasing productivity and achieving efficiencies. This will help us to protect frontline services.

Across my Portfolio as a whole we will need to reduce costs by a minimum of 5% while delivering at least the same quality services and volumes. Against this background the directorate will continue to seek to improve performance whilst delivering value for money services. There are likely to be reductions in staffing numbers.

While my portfolio covers what might be termed support services so we listen to our customers we should not forget that many functions are key to the effective governance of the Council and increasingly NHS Herefordshire. For instance pressures on Legal and

Democratic budgets are being caused by additional demands and workloads as a result of changes to the Safeguarding Agenda.

A key change, and part of the Transformation Programme, will be the creation of a new common framework for Organisational Redesign led by the Deputy Chief Executive. This will enable a consistent approach to organisational structures across HPS and the creation of centres of expertise where they are appropriate.

Against this background of fundamental, far reaching change we will ensure that following particular issues are addressed:

- Internal communications will be overhauled with more support for managers to implement team briefs & the electronic newsletter- *First Press* -to become more interactive
- We will continue to self evaluate performance and evidence outcomes and achievements whilst keeping bureaucracy to a minimum. We will also implement any new assessment procedures as they are formulated by Government – hopefully a lighter touch regime attuned to localities.
- The Sustainable Community Strategy will be reshaped in 2010 to reflect the priorities and issues of Herefordshire’s communities, places as well as themes.
- We will also ensure that efficiency targets are secured and that work will proceed with the fundamental re-design of corporate back office services underpinned by the investment in the new *Agresso* system for Human Resources, Payroll and Finance.
- The establishment of the Joint Venture Company (JV Co) owned by the Council and its health partners subject to formal decision through Cabinet and the Trust Boards and the transfer of in-scope services from the Directorate into the JV Co will begin.
- As identified in the HPS Customer Strategy, we will develop a clear picture of the different groups of Herefordshire citizens, businesses and visitors in order to .design services that better meet their particular needs
- There will also be a review of Customer Services to include:
  - Info by Phone capacity and service improvements
  - Customer Service Centre further front office integration
  - Avoidable contact levels
  - Satisfaction levels with service quality, convenience and choice
  - Value for money across all front office service areas.
- We will strive to improve the levels of citizen satisfaction with the Council overall
- There will be the development of Ross and Ledbury Integrated front office facilities
- We need to review and rationalise the way in which we engage with the public and partners across HPS.
- Further work is required to improve the Employee Opinion Survey results. Much work started in respect to this in the autumn of 2009, there is still a way to go.
- We will ensure the continuing development and delivery of Performance Plus (P+) and ensure a sufficient budget to pay for staff, ICT support etc.
- Prepare for the 2011 Census of Population.
- Major surveys will continue including a health and well being survey of Herefordshire residents in conjunction with NHS Herefordshire. However the future of the national biennial “Place Survey” for the Audit Commission is in doubt.
- The Council Occupational Health Team will continue to support Directorates by providing a range of services during times of change and seeking external accreditation via the Faculty of Occupational Medicine.
- The Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) will be integrated into the new Public Health Directorate, develop Community Emergency Plans and support national planning exercises like “*Watermark*” scheduled for March 2011.
- We will continue to work on partnership governance issues through the HPS steering group

## Appendix 1

### Budgets

<b>The Budget for each service area for 2010-2011 is:</b>	<b>(£,000)</b>
Central directorate costs	202
Communications	362
Partnership	246
Customer Services	1,507
Policy and Performance	707
Legal and democratic	3,009
Human Resources and organisational development	1,517
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>7,550</b>
<i>ICT [includes; ICT Services, Corporate ICT projects &amp; Community network, Information Services]</i>	6,257
<b>Overall total for whole directorate</b>	<b>13,807</b>
Smallholdings	(172)
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>13,635</b>

*The above includes an additional budget of £1,100,000 for the Community Network*

## Performance Indicators 2009-10 performance at year-end

Indicator	Tolerance	2009-10 Target	Latest Performance	Judgement	Direction of Travel
Local - customer satisfaction	Bigger is better	83%	72.10%	1	▼
NI 14 – avoidable contact	Smaller is better	24%	37.75%	1	▼
Local – average sickness (full-time equivalent)	Smaller is better	5%	4%	4	n/a
Local - number of vacant posts as a proportion of the approved establishment	Smaller is better	4.50%		1	n/a
Local - % of key performance indicators improving on last year	Bigger is better	60%	45%	1	▼
Local – the % of Local Authority employees with a disability	Bigger is better	4%	1%	1	n/a
Local - the % of Local Authority employees from ethnic minority communities	Bigger is better	3%	0.71%	1	n/a

## Key

PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS AND ACTION PLANS	
4	Overall, performance is significantly better than target(s)
3	On track to achieve target(s)
2	Slightly behind target(s)
1	Significantly behind target(s)

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	
▲	Overall, performance is better than for the same period last year
◀▶	Overall, performance is the same as for this period last year
▼	Overall, performance is behind that for the same period last year

## Customer Services benchmarking data

## i) Customer Service Centres

Local Government 'One Stop Shop' Benchmarking Group	Herefordshire (2009-2010)	Top Quartile Average
The convenience and accessibility of our location	86%	92%
The level of comfort and facilities in our waiting area	88%	91%
How your enquiry is dealt with	92%	95%
The length of time you waited	88%	93%
Our opening times	93%	93%
The information provided	96%	96%
The professionalism of our staff	95%	97%
The knowledge of our staff	96%	97%
The attitude of staff	96%	97%

The overall performance in relation to the one stop shop benchmarking group is relatively high, with marginal differences between the top quartile average and Herefordshire's performance. (Exceptions to this are: 'Convenience and accessibility' and 'How your enquiry is dealt with' and 'Professionalism of staff'). These issues are being addressed through performance management and the customer relationship management (CRM) review business case process.

## ii) Customer Contact Centre

Name of authority	Calls offered	% answered	Answered within 15/20 seconds	Average wait for answer	Average talk time per call	Call handling time	Staffing	Calls answered per staff	Talk time per staff (mins)	Call handling time per staff (mins)
Herefordshire	68,706	72	39	142	244	544	15	3,277	13,328	29,714
Top quartile	98,484	95	83	111*	225*	288*	46	3,276	8,452*	13,397*
Mid quartile	48,188	91*	72*	34	170	233	23	2,274	5,878	9,147

The overall performance in relation to Contact Centre is a more complex issue. This is because of the large variations in services delivered within each authority. As a consequence, some care is required regarding comparison between quartiles. Overall, however, Herefordshire appears to be disadvantaged due to staffing levels. Whilst it appears Herefordshire's contact centre is comparable in relation to the overall level of calls offered and calls answered per full time equivalent, the limitations of such a small staff group are reflected in the other performance measures.

These issues are being addressed through a limited Customer Services reorganisation and the CRM review business case process.

Please note: \* relates to targets for 10-11.