

CORPORATE HEALTH PERFORMANCE

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

15TH APRIL, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To receive an update on the Council's corporate performance in relation to our National and Local Best Value Performance Indicators from 1st April 2003 to 31st January, 2004.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT performance in relation to the Council's National and Local Corporate Best Value Indicators, from 1st April 2003 to 31st January, 2004, be noted

Reasons

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

1. During 2003/2004 corporate performance is being reported to Cabinet at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 monthly intervals, in line with the Council's Performance Management Framework.
2. Corporate performance for the 10 month period 1st April 2003 – 31st January 2004 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.

Above target performance

3. **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 2003 to 31st January 2004 was 2.3%.

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

4. **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 10 months of this year is already up to 328. The high level of recorded complaints reflects improved collection arrangements and a greater focus on customer service issues across the authority.
5. **Staff mileage (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is to reduce mileage by 1% in comparison to 2002/2003. Performance for the 10 months up to 31st January 2004, compared to the 10 months up to 31st January 2003, showed a 20% reduction.
6. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004, compared to the 10 months up to 31st January 2003, showed a 40% increase.

Areas for Improvement

7. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 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 systems, the implementation of tax credits and shortages in staffing resources, have all affected performance in this area. During January 2004 a pilot scheme was introduced to improve performance, by arranging special interviews with applicants to obtain all the information required at the outset of an application. If the pilot is successful it will be introduced on a countywide basis.
8. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 was 11 days. This shows an improvement over the 8 month period up to 30th November 2003, when performance 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 current performance is now meeting the 9 day target.
9. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 was 25%. 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 was no longer a requirement to issue renewal claims to pensioners and performance for the month of February has now improved to 40%. The requirement to submit renewal claims will be abolished for all claims from April 2004 and this indicator will no longer be used.
10. **Domestic burglaries per 1000 population (National Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 8 per 1000 population, whilst performance for the 10 months up to 31st January 2004, suggests that the annual figure will be approximately 10 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.

11. **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, whilst performance up to 31st January 2004 was only 42%. However, we are still aiming for 60% by that date. During 2003/04, there has been limited development of the current web site, with the focus of effort being concentrated on the development of the e-Gateway infrastructure, which will be the main platform for the delivery of electronic services in the future.
12. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 was 87%. However, this compares with an outturn performance of 58% for 2002/2003, demonstrating a significant improvement in performance for the current year.
13. **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 12 months period up to 31st January 2004 was 57%. 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.
14. **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 12 months period up to 31st January 2004 was 57%. 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.
15. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 was 71%. 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.
16. **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 10 months up to 31st January 2004 was 65%. 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 2003/2004