

Overall Performance Improvement Plan Group: exceptions report to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council

1. EXCEPTIONS:

Herefordshire Community Strategy (HCS) and the LAA

- The action plan to implement the HCS and the LAA was scheduled in the Overall Plan to be in place by April. The LAA element has been approved by the Partnership Board and submitted to Government. The action plan for the HCS is still being developed to ensure that it includes clear targets and the key actions and milestones towards. This will be discussed at both the next CMB and joint CMB and Cabinet meetings.

Performance management framework

- The launch of the agreed new performance improvement cycle has been delayed because the assumptions and ground rules for the commissioning of three-year proposals have substantially to be based on a fundamentally re-worked Medium-Term Financial Strategy. A revised timetable is being prepared with the Director of Resources and will be put to CMB to consider on 19 June.
- Consideration being given, as part of the new performance improvement cycle, as to how to build in the cross-cutting issues, such as diversity and sustainability, into the development and interrogation of the three-year proposals; also to what further needs to be done to ensure that such issues are addressed systematically in the development of all new policies and programmes.
- Job description and person specification finalised for Improvement Manager post in Environment and the joint post for Corporate and Customer Services, Resources and HR. Placement/recruitment, as appropriate to go ahead immediately after a satisfactory Job Evaluation is determined.
- Interim appointment being put in place in Children's Services while permanent structure designed urgently, based on models of best practice (Tony Geeson leading, working with the Director and George Salmon). Job description and person specification finalised and awaits Directors approval. JE process also awaits final clarity on where this function fits into the Directorate structure. Intention is to advertise in at the end of the month for recruitment in September if external appointment is required
- Similar for Adult and Community Services.
- Careful corporate monitoring of adequacy of interim arrangements in Children's Services and Adult And Community Services. CMB

members need to be required to release additional skilled staff to contribute, if required.

Political structures and Scrutiny

- Scrutiny Improvement Plan reviewed and presented. The Constitutional Review Working Group will report to the July Council Meeting.

ICT

- Future sustainability of the e-gateway is being addressed at the moment. Expected completion date for this is July.
- Voice mail pilot has completed, but roll-out has been delayed – revised date of July 2006

Vulnerable adults

- No draft of an overall improvement plan for adult social care yet produced. Now promised before the end of June. Support being provided by Policy and Performance. Director of Adult and Community Services to be asked to attend the 29 June meeting of the Group to present the draft plan and discuss the key issues and risks.
- Still awaiting compliant Directorate Plan and Adult Social Care service plan. (Policy and Performance have provided detailed advice on several occasions and offered further support.)

Children and Young People

- A major risk to this Improvement Plan and that for the JAR is the ability of the Duty Team to continue to operate successfully in safeguarding children. It arises because of shortages of permanent qualified social workers and significant problems in recruiting to the Team. Agency Staff are covering most gaps, which is highly cost-ineffective. The biggest issue appears to be starting salaries. Some minor changes to the relevant Council web pages may also help to a degree.
- Although a first draft has now been prepared of the Forward Delivery Plan 2006-07 for the Children and Young People's Plan, it is not yet fit for purpose. That it becomes so promptly is crucial not only to the delivery of the JAR Action Plan but, even more important in the longer-term, to the successful development and delivery of services for children and young people beyond that.

The JAR Group decided on 14 June that a rapid timetable for its action plan must be agreed when it next meets, on 28 June.

2. CHANGES TO OVERALL PLAN:

Paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 have been amended in the C&YP section of the Council's Overall Improvement Programme. The most important new material is uploaded from the now approved JAR Performance Improvement Plan. Specific key children's safeguarding performance indicators have been included in the appendices.