

Annual efficiency statement - forward look - 2007/8

Appendix2

Details

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STRATEGY FOR SECURING EFFICIENCY GAINS - 2005/6 to 2007/8

COMMITMENT

As an excellent Council we are committed to achieving the targets of 7½% efficiencies by March 2008.

STRATEGY

We will continue to adopt a corporate approach in meeting the agenda engaging Members, Staff, Management, Trade Unions and our partners.

In recognising partnership and joint working as an essential element in achieving longer-term efficiencies a Durham County Accord has been established within which authorities in County Durham are committed to working together for the benefits of the Community.

We will continue to work with the Regional Centre of Excellence to promote joint working across the region and explore delivery vehicles to better achieve collaborative working.

We will formally embed the efficiency plans within the organisation ensuring it links to the following:

- The National and Regional Agendas
- Community Plans
- Corporate Plans
- Medium Term Financial Plans
- Service Plans

The approach has been phased to deliver over 3 years.

- A substantial part of our target has been met.
- We are continuing to build upon initiatives already in place, which continue to secure year on year benefits..(Productivity (Reducing Sickness), T government and Procurement).
- We have improved our performance management framework, which has seen a substantial improvement in BVPI's for 2005/6. We plan to introduce more local measures in future plans to identify further improvement and value for money..
- In terms of the efficiency target we are taking a simplistic approach to avoid the process becoming too bureaucratic in terms of producing indicators and evidence to the Audit Commission. Whilst ODPM have developed measuring tools there are significant gaps.

KEY ACTIONS -2007/8

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. Assess the impact of the introduction of the 4 day week.

TRANSACTIONAL

1. Improved collections to reduce the bad debts provisions.
2. Review processes and procedures to improve the the turnaround of benefit claims and increase visits to claimants.

CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Implements Property management structure and review Asset disposal strategy to realise capital receipts to support the capital programme reducing the need to borrow on the markets.
2. Implement the findings of the best value review of support services.

PROCUREMENT

- 1.Implement the findings of the commodity spend analysis and negotiate efficiencies through framework agreements.

PRODUCTIVE TIME

1. Continuation of our initiative to reduce the level of sickness absence.

	Expected annual efficiency gains (£)	...of which cashable (£)	Related links
Adult social services	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Children's services	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Culture and sport	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Environmental services	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		

Local transport (highways)	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Local transport (non-highways)	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
LA social housing (capex)	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
LA social housing (other)	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Non-school educational services	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		

Supporting people	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Homelessness	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Other cross-cutting efficiencies not covered above			
Corporate services	356,500	329,500	Documents People Projects
	Strategy: 1.Continue the strategy to dispose of surplus assets and realise receipts to support the Council's Capital Programme thus negating the need to borrow. Revenue savings on potential cost of borrowing. 2. Implement the findings of the review of Corporate Services.		
	Key actions: 1.Realise expected receipts of £xm depending upon planning considerations.(£6m @ 4.75% = £285k). 2.Identify efficiency savings and redirecting them into community engagement and staff training. (£71,500).		
Procurement - goods and services	50,000	50,000	Documents People Projects
	Strategy: Implement the findings of the commodity spend analysis		

	Key actions: Secure contract and framework agreements to reduce costs in service delivery without detriment to the standard of service.		
Procurement - construction	0	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy:		
	Key actions:		
Productive time	62,000	0	Documents People Projects
	Strategy: Continue the initiative to reduce sickness to upper quartile performance.		
	Key actions: Robust monitoring of sickness absence ensuring management action when corporate thresholds are triggered.Reduce sickness from 9 to 8 days on average, Salary & wages bill is £14m.		
Transactions	216,500	100,500	Documents People Projects
	Strategy: 1. Improved collection of old corporate debt to secure reduction in bad debts provisions. 2. Continuous review of systems/feedback from the public to improve benefit turnaround of claims. 3. Increase visits to assist benefit claimants whilst simultaneously identifying fraudulent overpayments.		

	<p>Key actions: 1. Monitor collection performance, target old as well as current debt.</p> <p>2. Review Bad debts provisions. Estimated reduction is £50k.</p> <p>3. Review the effects of implementing the contact centre.</p> <p>4. Target turnaround of benefit claims improving from 31 to 25 days. Non cashable efficiency calculated at £76.5k.</p> <p>5. Increased recovery of overpayments reduced by increase in bad debts provision (overpayments). Efficiency = £90k.</p>		
Miscellaneous efficiencies	24,000	24,000	Documents People Projects
	Strategy: 1. Budget efficiency process to identify efficiencies to be realigned to other priorities.		
	Key actions: 1. Identified within operational budgets as part of the budget process. (£24k cashable).		
Total	709,000	504,000	