

Our Performance in 2003/4

Effective Corporate Management

We are focusing on five corporate management objectives

- To promote community involvement and ensure that the aims and actions of the Council are effectively presented and communicated
- To take a leading role in building and supporting partnerships to deliver better services
- To promote economic, social and environmental well-being in the planning and development of services to meet strategic and community needs
- To ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the management of the Council's resources
- To continually improve the delivery of high quality services and implement innovative solutions to meet changing local needs and community aspirations

We are committed to effectively managing our resources and ensuring that future strategic plans respond to identified needs and aspirations. Our 'Embracing Change' programme continues to address the main issues arising from the 2002 CPA corporate assessment and provide a co-ordinated approach to delivering the changes that will help the council to achieve its ambition.

The continued provision of high quality services and the ability to improve service delivery relies on strong corporate governance from both elected Members and officers and good working arrangements with a wide range of partners. During 2003/04 the Council achieved considerable improvement to its services, which was reflected in an overall service performance score of 4 out of 4 in the updated CPA scorecard in 2003. The Council received an overall judgement of 'GOOD' in 2003.

Priorities for Improvement (2003/04)

Following our Corporate Performance Assessment in 2002, the County Council agreed its corporate priorities for improvement in 2003/4 and these were:

- Further development of the Council's framework for strategic and financial planning and performance management
- Further development of equalities and equal opportunities strategies, which will contribute to our progress to meeting the Equality Standard and requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)
- Further development of support for LSPs, looking to increase community engagement and involvement to improve the capacity of

communities to participate in democratic and service delivery processes

- A review of the organisational structure and leadership to ensure that the council has the capacity to deliver its future plans

Our Performance against priorities (2003/4)

Our Key achievements in 2003/2004 include:

Development of the Council's framework for strategic and financial planning and performance management

- Agreement of a Medium Term Financial Plan (2004/05 – 2006/07) to underpin our 3 year strategy.
- Procurement of a corporate performance management software system, which will help the Council to develop an effective mapping framework for improvement planning activity and be the basis for operational planning and monitoring of actions plans and performance in the future
- Introduction of improvement plan monitoring in 2003/4, which will be improved on with the new software system in 2004/5
- Considerable progress with our Risk Management arrangements. A Risk Management Policy Strategy, Risk Management Strategy and an Action Plan of improvement were agreed, as well as a Register of Significant Strategic Risks.
- Completion of a review of our Council's Procurement Strategy.
- Achievement of £2.2million savings in 2003/04 towards the procurement driven efficiency savings target across all Council Services of £10million for 2002/7. From April 2004, a revised target is in place to achieve £33.974 million by 2007/8

Development of equalities and equal opportunities strategies, which will contribute to progress to meeting the Equality Standard and DDA

- Agreement of our Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan, which was amended and finalised following extensive consultation and published in March 2004.
- Achievement of Level 1 of the Equality Standard in March 2003, with an expectation that achievement of Level 2 will be confirmed as at March 2004.
- Continued implementation of an equalities and diversity training programme. By March 2004 over 1800 staff had received awareness training.
- Agreement in April 2004 of a contract with a private company to supply the translation of Council documents into other languages as required.

Development of support for Local Strategic Partnerships looking to increase community engagement and involvement to improve the

capacity of communities to participate in democratic and service delivery processes

- Agreement of the County Durham Strategic Vision by the CDSP in February 2004. This is the Council's official community strategy and it is due to be formally launched later in 2004. The Vision identifies twelve key challenges and we are taking the lead in several of them.
- Continued support for the countywide LSP framework, with a Cabinet Member and lead Chief Officer for each district LSP, and contributions to the preparation of community strategies by each LSP.
- Ongoing research and consultation with communities across the County, with the aim of developing a Consultation Strategy for DCC that will ensure effective engagement with all communities. The consultation strategy is due to be finalised later in 2004.
- Agreement of an Access to Service Strategy as a joint exercise with all of the district councils and linked to the joint work by the e-government partnership.
- Agreement of the County Council's draft Customer Services Strategy, which will be led by the newly designated Director of Customer Services to reflect the links between IT and effective access to services

A review of the organisational structure and leadership to ensure that the Council has the capacity to deliver its future plans

- Implementation of the action plan arising from the organisational review, which was completed in 2003. The new organisational structure was formally launched on 29th March 2004 and its implementation will be reviewed later in the year.

Other Key Achievements in 2003/2004 include:

- Introduction of the 'Countywide' newspaper in July 2003, which is circulated to all households in the County every 2 months.
- A significant increase in the level of e-enabled transactions, which increased from 55% to 93% in 2003/04.









What we did not achieve in 2003/2004

- The development and implementation of a consultation strategy, which has been delayed to allow the Council time to ensure that the strategy makes all appropriate links to other developments across the County Council

Our Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Actual 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
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BV2 Level of Equality Standard	Level 1 	Level 2	Level 2 	Level 3	Level 3
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Indicator	Actual 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
BV11a Percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	37% 	38%	37.5% 	38%	39%
BV11b Percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities	0.57% 	0.5%	1.52% 	1.5%	1.6%
BV156 Percentage of Council buildings open to the public that have areas suitable and accessible to disabled people	12.28% 	25%	25% 	35%	40%
BV157 The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a % of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery	55% 	70%	93% 	95%	100%

Our Future Plans for 2004/05 – 2006/07

Our key priorities for improvement for Corporate Management in 2004/05-2006/07 are:

- Implement and progress the Corporate Equalities Plan with actions to achieve level 3 of the Equalities Standard by March 2005.
- Continue to develop the Council's corporate framework for strategic and financial planning and performance management.
- Improve community engagement and increase the capacity of our communities to participate in democratic and service delivery processes.
- Agree and implement a co-ordinated strategy for the development of services to customers within the context of the countywide Access to Services strategy.
- Improve co-ordination of Business Support Services to ensure a joined up approach in delivering the organisational and cultural changes that are required.
- Develop the people strategy.

Our Investment priorities are:

- Equalities and Diversity
- Customer Services Strategy/ Access to Services

ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT (2004/05 – 2006/07)

Against our key priorities we have identified the following actions for improvement.

C1: Agree and implement the Corporate Equalities Plan with actions to achieve level 3 of the Equalities Plan by March 2005	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Progress the Action Plan to achieve Level 3 of the Corporate Equalities Plan, as detailed in Appendix C	By March 2005
C2: Continue to develop the Council's corporate framework for strategic and financial planning and performance management	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Implement the Software Performance system across Council for monitoring BVPIs and to improve our service planning for the future.	Initial implementation commencing in June 2004. BVPI monitoring and reporting facilitating the new system from September 2004.
Implement the risk management software system linked to our audit system and develop corporate risk management arrangements in line with the agreed Risk Management Strategy.	Train recently designated service risk managers in the use of the software system during 2004. Identify the council's risk reporting and monitoring needs and assess how this can be met by MAGIQUE (software system) by September 2004. Establish roles and responsibilities for all parties relating to risk including the corporate and service risk managers, chief officers, members, internal audit, project managers, by September 2004.
C3: Improve community engagement and increase the capacity of our communities to participate in democratic and service delivery processes	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Programme of Community events to improve the County Council's engagement with communities across the Council.	Throughout 2004/5

C4: Agree and implement a co-ordinated strategy for the development of services to customers within the context of the countywide Access to Services Strategy	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Agree new structure for Customer Services	By March 2005
Revise implementation Plan for Customer Services Strategy	By March 2005
C5: Improve co-ordination of Business Support Services to ensure a joined up approach in delivering the organisational and cultural changes that are required	
Present the Final Report from Best Value Review of Business Support Services to Members, including an improvement action plan.	By end July 2004
Implementation of Action Plan.	2004/05 onwards
C6: Develop the People Strategy	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Finalise the People Strategy for endorsement by Cabinet, following extensive consultation.	By October 2004
Review current appraisal arrangements across the County Council, and develop a corporate system, which will be built into the overall performance management arrangements for the County Council.	By March 2005
C7: Ensure implementation of the IEG strategy to achieve 100% by 2005	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Install software for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and demonstrate that we can log and manage service requests across four local authorities	August 2004
Extend CRM to three remaining authorities in the County.	January 2005
C8: Ensure achievement of the LPSA targets by March 2005	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Take corrective action to achieve LPSA targets.	By end of March 2005
C9: Review the communications strategy, both internal and external, and develop a co-ordinated approach to consultation	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets

Finalise the Consultation Strategy following extensive consultation and a number of high profile events to engage with the public and specific communities in the County. See C3 above.	Complete by March 2005
Review the communications strategy taking account of the work on the Consultation Strategy.	Complete by March 2005
C10: Support the development of the County Durham Strategic Partnership and the development and delivery of a County Durham Strategic Vision	
Actions (2004/5)	Targets
Organise a public launch of the County Durham Strategic Vision	Launch event to be held in July/ August 2004
Organise a public State of the County event to demonstrate progress against the 12 Vision Challenges	To prepare for the event, planned for May 2005
Ensure agreement of the second LPSA by the CDSP	By March 2005

Other Links –

- Access to Service Strategy
- Asset Management Plan & Capital Strategy
- County Durham Strategic Vision
- Community Development Strategy and Action Plan
- County Durham Sustainable Development Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Sustainable Communities Guide
- Procurement Strategy
- Race Equality Scheme
- Risk Management Strategy