



Report of the Head of Corporate Policy

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide a performance update for quarter one, 2006/07 for Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) relevant to our Corporate Aim, Ensuring Effective Corporate Leadership.
- 2 Full details of our objectives, achievements and plans for this aim are set out in the relevant section of the Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07. Our main corporate leadership priorities are represented by the Embracing Change programme. This includes: performance management, equalities and diversity, the People Strategy, Community, Localism and Access, and the BVPs reported here tell us how we are doing in some of these areas.
- 3 Performance for quarter 1, 2006/07 for BVPs aligned to Ensuring Effective Corporate Leadership is available in Appendix A. Where possible and appropriate 12 month rolling totals have been used throughout this document. Reference to data for quarter one relates to 12 months ending 30 June 2006 and 2005/06 year-end relates to the 12 months ending 31 March 2006. This allows comparisons to be made between quarter one, 2005/06 year-end and targets.
- 4 There are 15 BVPs relevant to our Corporate Aim, Ensuring Effective Corporate Leadership. Of these, 7 indicators improved performance, 3 deteriorated and 5 remained static.

Performance	BVPI
Improved	8 – invoices paid within 30 days 11b – top 5%: black / minority ethnic (T) 11c – top 5%: with a disability (T) 12 – days / shifts lost to sickness 14 – early retirements 15 – ill-health retirements 16a – disabled employees
Static	2a – Equality Standard Level (T) 2b – the duty to promote race equality 17a - % ethnic minority employees 156 - % LA public buildings – disabled 175 – racial incidents – further action (T)
Deteriorated	11a – Top 5%: women 157 - % e-government 174 – racial incidents per 100,000 population (T)

(T) denotes that the target for that indicator was met.

Areas of improved performance

5 The performance of a number of indicators improved during quarter 1, 2006/07. Of particular note:

- **BV 8 – Invoices paid within 30 days**

During quarter one (1 April 2006 to 30 June 2006), the authority received 111,788 undisputed invoices, of which 104,885 were paid within 30 days. Although the target for this indicator has not been achieved, quarter one performance has improved since the year end.

- **BV 11b – top 5%: black / minority ethnic**

The number of black and minority ethnic employees in the top 5% of earners has increased from 4 to 5 during quarter one, exceeding the 2006/07 target. It should be noted that due to the small number of people meeting the criteria and the variation in the cut-off salary and number of employees representing the top 5%, a small increase / reduction in numbers significantly affects the percentage.

- **BV 11c – top 5%: with a disability**

The number of employees with a disability in the top 5% of earners has increased from 15 to 16 during quarter one, exceeding the 2006/07 target. Positive efforts have been made to improve the quality of data available with regard to staff declaring a disability. The percentage reported for this BVPI is significantly affected in the same manner as 11b above.

- **BV 12 – days / shifts lost to sickness**

Until the early part of 2005/06, the authority experienced a continuous quarter on quarter decline in sickness rate, then during the later stages of 2005/06 the rate increased. Quarter one data shows that sickness is again declining. 6,462.81 fewer sick days and fewer employees have resulted in an improvement in performance for this indicator. This decline can be attributed to the revised Managing Sickness Absence Policy that was introduced during 2005 and training for managers that is still on-going.

- **BV 14 – early retirements**

Performance of this indicator has improved during quarter one and the 2006/07 target has been met. This is due to a decrease in the number of early retirements from 137 (75 LGPS, 62 teachers) to 125 (67 LGPS, 58 teachers)

- **BV 15 – Ill-health retirements**

Performance of this indicator has improved during quarter one and the 2006/07 target has been achieved. This is due to a decrease in the number of ill-health retirements from 43 (26 LGPS, 17 teachers) to 31 (21 LGPS, 10 teachers). This decrease in the number of ill-health retirements follows the

publication of the council's revised Sickness Absence Policy that tightens the previous process.

- **BV 16a – disabled employees**
Although below target, performance of this indicator has increased during the first quarter. This is due to an increase in the number of staff declaring a disability from 216 to 226. The increase is due to the positive efforts made to improve the quality of data available. Note, within County Durham 21.5% of the economically active population have declared that they have a 'limiting long-term illness'.

Areas of deteriorated performance

6 The performance of a number of indicators deteriorated during quarter 1, 2006/07. Of particular note:

- **BV 11a – Top 5%: women**
The number of female employees in the top 5% of earners has decreased from 229 to 223 during quarter one. It should be noted that variation in the cut-off salary and the number of employees representing the top 5%, a small increase / reduction in numbers significantly affects the percentage. The council is continuing to support a focus on the diversity and equality agenda across the workforce through facilities like the on-going Diversity Training Programme and the 'Action for Equality' statement that provides our positive approach to job applications from all sections of the community.
- **BV 157 - % e-government (now a local indicator)**
Some new additional elements were recently brought into the calculation and these account for the apparent, rather than actual, drop in performance from 100% to 98.27%. We continue to work to a target of 100%.
- **BV 174 – racial incidents per 100,000 population.**
The number of racial incidents has increased from 142 (1 April 05 to 31 March 06) to 162 (1 July 05 to 30 June 06). The authority has significantly raised awareness of the need for racial incident reporting and the 14% increase is not as high as expected.

Recommendations

That Corporate Scrutiny Sub-Committee Members:

- (i) note the contents of this report
- (ii) agree to receiving subsequent quarterly performance progress reports

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