



**Chester-le-Street**  
District Council

**REPORT TO:** Executive

**DATE OF MEETING:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008

**REPORT OF:** Director of Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Corporate Performance Report Summary  
April 2008 – September 2008

**ITEM NUMBER:** 8

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## **1 Purpose and Summary**

- 1.1 This is the final year of the council as an organisation in its own right. One of the key risks is that performance may drop and it is distracted to its other commitment and duty to support Local Government Re-organisation. Ensuring the council retains a robust performance management structure is key to its direction of travel in its final year. The council remains committed to improvement and this report is part of this commitment. The document attached in Appendix 1 is a summary of a more detailed document which is available as a background Paper. It includes full details of performance on the new National Indicator set Indicators for the quarter. It is considered that the council continues to make progress on corporate issues although there remains a great deal to be done.
- 1.2 The first six months of 2008/2009 show a mixed level of performance. The Transition Plan is on track but only half of the new National Indicators are achieving target. While Local Indicators are showing improvement we do not perform well on corporate health local indicators compared to other councils in the county. Staff sickness is reducing and fewer people are leaving the organisation. Complaints are reducing and time taken to deal with complaints, MP enquiries and Freedom of Information requests are improving. There were fewer abandoned calls during the first six months of the year although as a result it has taken more time to respond to them. The Audit Commission published its report on Access to Service Inspection. While this shows some good practice in Chester-le-Street it is generally not positive across the county. Strategic Risks have been re-assessed and progress is being made in terms of Corporate Governance, Data Quality and Health and Safety.

1.3 Members are recommended to consider and comment on the progress on improvements and the contents of the Performance Report in Appendix 1 of the Report, address the learning and remedial measures identified and identify any other areas where improvements are required to corporate performance.

## **2. Consultation**

2.1 The Chief Executive and Directors, have been engaged in challenging the performance identified in the Corporate Performance Report and views have been accommodated in revised documents.

2.2 No other consultations were considered necessary at this stage including external consultations or engagement.

## **3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority**

3.1 The Transition Plan, will, in effect, replace the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process.

3.3 The performance management framework is a principle part of the Council's Transition Plan. This framework includes the reporting of performance to Executive and subsequently to Scrutiny on a quarterly basis. This report is part of the embedding of the framework.

3.4 The contents of this report not only includes progress on the plan but provides information on performance on corporate issues and all the priorities set out in the plan. Detailed reports on the progress of the '**People and Place**' priority are made to the Executive on a monthly basis.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Financial implications and value for money statement**

While there are no specific financial implications to this report a summary of financial performance information is incorporated within it. Any corrective or remedial action required by under-performance may have financial impacts. These impacts will be picked up in any proposals to address under-performance by relevant service team managers. From a value for money point of view the report shows that performance across the organisation is generally good and there is evidence of continued improvement in many areas. The Annual Audit and Inspection letter includes specific positive comments about value for money.

#### 4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are no direct implications of the recommendations of this report to Local Government Review. The Corporate Performance Report will identify issues relating to progress and performance on LGR from the councils perspective. There are no issues within the report which require us to consult with or secure the approval of the County Council.

#### 4.3 Legal

There are considered to be no direct legal issues of significance arising out of this report.

#### 4.4 Personnel

While there are no specific human resource implications to this report any choice of action to address under-performance may have an impact on human resources. This impact will be taken into account by service team managers in addressing remedial action to address under-performance.

#### 4.5 Other Services

The corporate performance relates to all Services within the Council and has implications for improvement in Service Delivery.

#### 4.6 Diversity

Progress on Equality and Diversity is a key issue in respect of the report. The council is improving on equality and diversity issues. The report has no implications on excluding any customer from accessing services delivered by the council. This month's diagrams have been improved to provide greater accessibility when copied in black and white. In addition full details of Best Value Performance Indicators have been included to help better understanding of definitions.

#### 4.7 Risk

There are clear risks to the organisation in failing to measure performance and not taking remedial action to put things right if they go wrong or stray off target. The purpose of this report is to assist in addressing this risk. The council is progressing well in terms of improving risk management and details are provided in Section 5 of Appendix 1.

#### 4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder. However the report covers progress on agreed priorities and performance indicators relating to this area of the council's activities.

#### 4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report. The report specifically addresses the council's progress in respect of Data Quality and it is considered that good progress is being made. There are no proposals for remedial measures in respect of any Data Quality issue.

#### 4.10 Other Implications

The report does not relate to a key decision. It is considered that the information can be communicated to the community by inclusion on the website. While the report has no specific impact on e-government proposals the work of the Modernisation Team was a key area of performance reported. The report raises no key issues in respect of procurement, service planning, sustainability, human rights or social inclusion outside the consideration of relevant performance indicators and corporate plan progress.

### **5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL**

5.1 The report is the result of improvements the council continues to make in embedding its performance management framework. The Corporate Performance Summary Report attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of a more detailed document which has been made available as a background paper. Members may wish to refer to that document to understand how summarised conclusions have been drawn. This format is as agreed at the CMT/Executive Away Day on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005. It now includes performance against:

- The corporate plan, where appropriate;
- Best Value Performance Indicators;
- Local Performance Indicators where available ;
- Financial monitoring when appropriate;
- Risk management;
- Human resources;
- Equality and Diversity;
- The Improvement and Recovery Plan;
- The Modernisation Team;
- Audit Reports;

- Partnerships;
- Data Quality;
- Health and Safety
- Contribution to Local Government Re-organisation;
- Corporate Governance; and
- Compliments, Comments and Complaints.

5.2 The Summary sets out achievement and non-achievements while identifying learning and remedial action where appropriate.

5.3 The first six months of 2008/2009 show a mixed level of performance. The Transition Plan is on track but only half of the new National Indicators are achieving target. While Local Indicators are showing improvement we do not perform well on corporate health local indicators compared to other councils in the county. Staff sickness is reducing and fewer people are leaving the organisation. Complaints are reducing and time taken to deal with complaints, MP enquiries and Freedom of Information requests are improving. There were fewer abandoned calls during the first six months of the year although as a result it has taken more time to respond to them. The Audit Commission published its report on Access to Service Inspection. While this shows some good practice in Chester-le-Street it is generally not positive across the county. Strategic Risks have been re-assessed and progress is being made in terms of Corporate Governance, Data Quality and Health and Safety. Key performance issues are summarised as follows:

- The Transition Plan proposals are on track with 30% targets achieved, 69% on target and only 1% behind target;
- Progress against the National Indicator set is not good with only 50% on target;
- Progress against Local Indicators is much better with 61% on target and 71% showing improvement although the council does not compare well against other districts on corporate health indicators;
- Staff Sickness rates have continued to improve slowly as sickness rates is now at 10.7% compared with 11% at the same time last year;
- The Audit Commission has reported on their inspection of Access to Services. While this shows some good practice it is not a positive picture across the county. The report will however assist the new authority to improve;
- Fewer complaints and few Ombudsman complaints were received although the number of compliments also fell;
- Response times in dealing with complaints from the public and the MP improved;
- No issues are to report in terms of Risk Management, Equality and Diversity, Partnerships, Data Quality or Corporate Governance;
- In terms of safety, progress is being made. While the number of employee recorded accidents has fell from last year accidents by the public has increased.

5.4 Members are advised that the report includes summaries of audit reports that have been received during the quarter. Action Plans have been agreed by officers to address recommendations made by the Audit Commission. This is considered to be the best way to bring these to the attention of the Executive. It is proposed that the next Corporate Performance Report will include Health and Safety. Modernisation Team progress will no longer be reported as the work of this service improvement team has been successfully achieved.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Members are recommended to consider and comment on the progress on improvements and the contents of the Performance Report in Appendix 1 of the Report, address the learning and remedial measures identified and identify any other areas where improvements are required to corporate performance.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED**

- 7.1 Corporate Performance Report April 2007 – September 2007
- 7.2 Transition Plan 2008/2009 March 2008
- 7.3 Corporate Plan 2006/2009 and 2007/2010

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**13<sup>th</sup> November 2008**  
**Version 2.0**

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