

IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
10 June 2008
(2.00 – 3.20pm)

Present:

Councillors:	R Betton (Chair)	GK Robinson
	MM English	JM Salter
	JH Fergus	A Smith
	DAR Forster	KW Stansfield
	O Hedley	K Watson
	D Metcalfe	N Wood

Officers:

- P Wilding (Interim Deputy Chief Executive)
- R Bowles (Assistant Chief Executive)
- J Kellett (Chief Finance Officer)
- M Dennis (Chief Governance Officer)
- V Connelly (HR & Improvement Advisor)

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2008 were received.

2 PROGRESS REPORT

Members were circulated with a copy of the progress report submitted to the Monitoring Board on 9 May 2008. The report summarised achievements since the previous meeting of the Monitoring Board on 15 February, including the adoption of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the completion of the Corporate Plan and refreshed Durham Local Area Agreement. All improvement projects had now been concluded with outstanding activities subsumed into the day job; the only exception being the Local Government Reorganisation project. The draft Comprehensive Performance assessment report had been received and comments made to the Audit Commission; the final report was due to be issued on 24 June.

Members asked to be provided with the closure reports for all improvement projects.

3 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Members were presented with a report which provided an analysis of performance during 2007/08, presented the new national performance indicator set to be used from 2008/09 onwards and proposed key indicators for the Council for 2008/09.

A summary of performance in 2007/08 is as follows:

	On Target %	Slight Fail %	Off Target %
Balanced Scorecard	50	10	40
Key Indicators	53	12	35
All Indicators	58	7	35

35.4% of all indicators were in the top quartile nationally, 29.7% were in the bottom quartile. It was noted that the rate of improvement from 2006/07 to 2007/08 was less than in the previous year; there had been significant improvement, however, from 2005/06 to 2006/07.

It was noted, in particular, that the number of working days lost through sickness, at 6.6 days, made the Council the highest performing local authority in the north east region.

A new set of national indicators had been introduced for 2008/09. It was proposed, however, that the Council retain a number of last year's indicators as local indicators as they would be important in terms of measuring performance against corporate and service priorities.

An Overview and Scrutiny Performance Working Group had recently been established, supported by the Assistant Chief Executive, to regularly monitor performance against key indicators throughout the year.

Members asked for reports to be prepared for the next meeting (on 9 September) giving an update on the situation in relation to refuse collection and recycling, and affordable housing.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Members noted the actions taken over recent months to enhance the Council's risk management arrangements. The Corporate Management Team, augmented by member risk champions from the Executive and Audit and Governance Committees, now acted as the Risk Management Group, meeting monthly to review risks and to take any necessary action arising. The updated corporate risk register was attached to the report.

5 BUDGET MONITORING

Members were presented with the outturn positions for capital and revenue expenditure for 2007/08. The capital programme for the year was underspent by nearly 50%; the Chief Finance Officer had implemented new arrangements to project manage capital schemes in 2008/09. Members considered it particularly important that schemes were completed in this final year of the Council's existence.

Revenue expenditure in 2007/08 showed a deficit of almost £106,000 on expenditure over available resources. Balances, as at 31 March 2008, stood at £1.424 million.

6 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor N Wood, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, attended to present a progress report on the committee's current work programme and recent initiatives being pursued by the committee. The committee, the previous week, had approved the report on Rural Policing and this, together with the proposed Work Programme for 2008/09 and the Annual Report for 2007/08, would be presented to Executive Committee on 14 July. Members discussed the role of the Performance Working Group (referred to at Minute 3 above)

and agreed that this group consider suitable means of performance managing the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Members noted the current position relating to preparations for local government reorganisation in County Durham. Following the elections on 1 May, the new Cabinet was in place and all members were currently involved in an extensive induction programme. The interviews for the appointment of the new authority's chief executive would take place on 1/2 July and, over the next few months, consultations would take place on proposed structures for the new authority's decision making arrangements.

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