



Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE OF MEETING: 30th July 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Corporate Performance Report Summary
April 2007 – March 2008

ITEM NUMBER:

1 Purpose and Summary

1.1 The Council is seeking to improve its monitoring of its performance as part of its performance management framework. Previously it has reported performance in a range of ways. This report provides a summary of key areas of performance from achieving the corporate plan to complaints. The document attached in Appendix 1 is a summary of a more detailed document which has been separately made available as a background paper. It includes full details of performance on Best Value Performance 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 It has been another significantly positive year for the council. This has been against challenges of a time of significant change as a result of local government re-organisation and in terms of transferring its housing function to a registered Social Landlord, Cestria Homes. The council's performance has been captured in the most positive Annual Audit and Inspection Letter received from the Audit Commission in the council's history. During the year the council marked its achievements against its ambitious improvement programme by becoming the first council to move from a 'poor' to a 'good' Comprehensive Performance Assessment categorisation. This has been followed by achieving a significant range of external assessed awards including a Chartermark for ICT, Investors in People accreditation for the whole council and the Quest Accreditation for the Leisure centre.

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.

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. The Corporate Performance report does advise that the council is in the process of developing a Transition Plan which will have LGR implications. These will be reported when the Transition Plan is reported to full 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.

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 web – site. 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 to Executive Members. 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 1st July 2005. It 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;
- 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. It is considered that the previous year was an incredibly successful year for the council. Since the CPA success in June 2008 the council received a significant set of accolades which showed that it was on the road towards excellence.

5.3 It has been another significantly positive year for the council. This has been against challenges of a time of significant change as a result of local government re-organisation and in terms of transferring its housing function to a registered Social Landlord, Cestria Homes. The council's performance has been captured in the most positive Annual Audit and Inspection Letter received from the Audit Commission in the council's history. During the year the council marked its achievements against its ambitious improvement programme by becoming the first council to move from a 'poor' to a 'good' Comprehensive Performance Assessment categorisation. This has been followed by achieving a significant range of external assessed awards including a Chartermark for ICT, Investors in People accreditation for the whole council and the Quest Accreditation for the Leisure centre.

The council's performance over the last year can be summarised as follows:

- The corporate plan proposals and priorities have reviewed through the development of a Transition Plan which was adopted by the council at the end of March 2008. The council now has a single priority 'People and Place' which it is now actively working to achieve;
- While 57% of indicators have achieved targets less are showing improvement since last year (57% compared with 67%), 47% of indicators show top quartile performance compared with only 40% last year although more also show bottom quartile performance.
- In terms of the 19 key indicators in need of improvement, 57% have seen targets achieved, 69% have improved, 62% show an improving trend and there are now more in top quartile and less in bottom quartile. This shows a significant improvement since last year;
- Local indicators continue to show performance improvement as 70% have improved last year compared with only 51% last year;
- 75% of actions in the Risk Strategy have been completed and work commenced on the remaining 25%, strategic risks will be re-assessed as a result of the adoption of the emerging Transition Plan;
- There is strong HR performance at a time of reduced capacity which not only included the transfer of a significant number of staff to Cestria but also included the achievement of Investors in People. Sickness levels within the council have improved. Staff turnover is high for the first time this year with a 15% turnover rate being recorded, reflecting the impact of uncertainty around LGR;
- There are no actions in the Equality Plan action plan behind target and the council now leads on equality in terms of Local Government Review;

- It has been agreed that the work of the Modernisation Team has been achieved and the Team no longer meets;
- The Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP2) has been drawn to a close following the council officially coming out of intervention. This has been replaced by an Improvement plan which is now accommodated in the Transition Plan;
- During the year the council has received some crucial and significant Audit Commission reports including a 'good' CPA report, a significantly and seriously positive Annual Audit and Inspection letter including a positive Direction of Travel statement following CPA recategorisation. In addition the council has achieved IIP accreditation (which proves the progress the council has made in supporting and developing its people), a Charter Mark for ICT, Quest accreditation for Leisure Services, Golden Green Apple Award, Green Flag Awards and a significantly positive Pilot Benefits Inspection judgement. The council also won the first regional Shine Improvement Award for proving to be the most improved council in the country;
- There have been significantly less complaints this year than last (234 compared with 339 this time last year) and the proportion of compliments, is improving towards one compliment being received for every one complaint received. Only 27% of complaints were considered justified compared to 44%% this time last year;
- Response times to corporate standards continued to improve overall;
- Significant progress has been made on Data Quality and a good Audit Commission Data Quality audit was received before the end of the year and was reflected in the Annual Audit letter and Direction of Travel Statement. At the end of the year the council reviewed its Data Quality Policy and its Data Quality Strategy Action Plan;
- Local Government Reorganisation has begun to impact on the work of the council and the council is taking a significant role in the programme; and
- Strong and positive arrangements in corporate governance exist and are improving

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 2006 – March 2007
- 7.2 Corporate Performance Report April – September 2007
- 7.3 Corporate Performance Report April – June 2007
- 7.4 Corporate Performance Report April 2007 – March 2008
- 7.5 Audit Commission Corporate Assessment June 2008
- 7.6 Audit Commission Benefits Service Pilot Inspection September 2007
- 7.7 Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter March 2008
- 7.8 Charter Mark Assessors Report August 2007
- 7.9 Investors in People Assessors Report October 2007
- 7.10 Transition Plan 2008/2009 March 2008
- 7.11 Corporate Plan 2006/2009 and 2007/2010

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8th June 2008
Version 1.0

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