

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy	Overview and Scrutiny	15 February 2010

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT – PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING & POLICY DIRECTORATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To report progress against the key actions and performance indicators contained in the Business Improvement Plans for the Partnerships, Planning and Policy Directorate covering the third quarter of 2009/2010

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

3. Business Plan Monitoring Statements form an important part of the Council Performance Management Framework and Business Planning Process. The statement gives the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to monitor the successful implementation of Business Improvement Plans.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. N/A

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region	√	Develop local solutions to climate change.	√
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	√	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	√
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organisation	√

BACKGROUND

6. As a consequence of the Council restructure in December 2009 the former Business Directorate and Policy and Performance Directorate were merged to create the new Partnerships, Planning and Policy Directorate. This Business Plan Monitoring Statement therefore reports progress against the key actions and performance indicators included in

the 2009/10 Business Improvement Plans for those former departments. The report covers the period 1st October to 31st December 2009.

7. Looking ahead to 2010/11 a single Business Improvement Plan for the new Directorate will be produced.

KEY MESSAGES

Policy & Performance

8. During this quarter, the directorate supported the development of the revised Corporate Strategy for 2010/11 which was debated and approved by Council on 3rd November. This included the identification of 33 key projects, which the Directorate followed through by leading the development of project mandates for all the new projects to ensure they are initiated and will support delivery of our corporate objectives. In order to ensure we continue to manage projects well, 24 staff and LSP partners were also trained on the Council's project management toolkit during this quarter.
9. In conjunction with Groundwork and Hoghton residents a funding bid was made to the Low Carbon Community Challenge to explore the development of a community renewable energy project for the village. The application sought to extend the LSP project 'warmer homes, cooler climates' which aims to reduce Hoghton's residential carbon footprint as many homes in the area are off-grid from the main gas network and currently emit high levels of carbon emissions through inefficient sources of energy, e.g. oil and gas delivered in tanks. We were notified in the new year that 230 bids were received with only 10 projects selected. Unfortunately, our application was unsuccessful. However, Groundwork are continuing to deliver the LSP project in the village and a community workshop was held in January on energy management. Groundwork have also offered to continue to look for other potential sources of funding for a renewable energy project.
10. During this period, we continued to provide evidence to the Audit Commission for the Comprehensive Area Assessment and in late December 2009 we were informed that our Organisational Assessment had secured 4 out of 4 for both managing performance and use of resources. As a consequence we were one of only four councils nationally to achieve these top scores and one of only two district council's.
11. During the third quarter all our other scheduled actions and milestones contained within our Business Improvement Plan were achieved. Below are a number of examples:
 - The overall corporate support services report was completed and presented to Executive Cabinet. Recommendations and savings where appropriate, informed the Council's restructure and others will be incorporated into the Council's transformation programme.
 - We successfully delivered the Council's major winter event – 'Chorley Christmas Lights switch on'. This involved organising, managing and publicising the event and all related activities. The event was well received and plans are already underway for next year's event.
 - We continued to design and produce a range of key information documents e.g production of Food News newsletter for local businesses; produced posters and features for 'Get up and Go'; developed an events schedule for 2010 including developing an events publicity protocol, drafted the council's fourth edition of the Chorley Smile magazine and produced the 2010 waste calendars.

- We participated in a national Virtual Town Hall pilot to improve the Council's engagement with residents using social networking.

KEY MESSAGES

Housing

12. Following approval by Executive Cabinet In December to bring the Home Improvement Agency back in house from 1st April 2010, a project team has been established and work is now on-going to establish a high-quality, value for money holistic agency as part of the Council's Housing Service.
13. During this period, a new Allocations Policy was also finalised and approved by Executive Cabinet and the Directorate are progressing implementation. This new policy will support the forthcoming introduction of Choice Based Lettings scheduled for implementation later this year.
14. Time was spent this period making representations to various sub-regional and regional fora against the proposed reduction in housing capital grant (RHP) for both Lancashire and in particular Chorley where our allocation will be reduced by 68%. This funding is used primarily to improve the decency of private sector housing stock. A report will be presented to Executive Cabinet in February which outlines how the funding will be allocated.
15. Other key actions and projects for this period were also delivered and include for example:
 - Continuing to make significant progress in the refurbishment of Cotswold supported housing. Three phases have been completed now, including two new living areas (one for singles and one for families) and a secure access corridor restricting access to family areas by single people. The next stage involves improved disabled access, refurbishment of single rooms and corridors. There are also plans being developed for landscaping the rear garden and a 'grow your own vegetables' initiative.
 - A new Home Assistance Policy has been drafted and approved for consultation by the Executive Cabinet. Given the reduction in capital grant as outlined above, the policy seeks to ensure any housing grants are targeted to those most in need/most vulnerable.
 - Affordable housing delivery and achievement of targets remains on track. In particular the Purchase and Repair project is progressing well and expected to deliver units of affordable housing this financial year.
 - Work commenced this quarter on commissioning the Private Stock Condition Survey which will commence in the new-year. This will be a valuable source of information for future Housing Strategy development.

KEY MESSAGES

Planning

16. A new Head of service commenced with the Directorate in October 2009.
17. Work commenced this period in establishing a section 106/Play & Recreation Fund which was approved by Executive Cabinet in December. Work is now progressing to develop and implement an application process and arrangements to administer the funds.

18. Other key actions and projects for this period were also delivered and include:
- In taking forward plans to develop better mechanisms for working with Parish and Town Council's a meeting took place in November with representatives from those Councils to review matters pertaining to the handling of planning applications. The feedback from this meeting will be used to inform the transformation and improvement programme for the directorate.
 - During this period the directorate continued to support the development of the LDF Core Strategy which is expected to be ready for sign off at the end of March 2010. Work has also commenced on the development of the Site Allocations DPD which will be consulted upon over the Summer.

KEY MESSAGES

Economic Development

19. Through working closely with local businesses, Chorley Council provided the Mid Lancashire Future Jobs Fund with 22 new vacancies for young people. The vacancies from All Garden Services, Environappies and Cleaning Genies have now been passed through to Job Centre Plus and suitable candidates are being assessed. Chorley's All Garden Services vacancy is the first to be filled and the successful candidate is now in post. This new role with All Garden Services will provide gardening support for the elderly.
20. As the Accountable Body for the Intensive Start-up Support Programme ISUS, Chorley Council is managing this £2million programme across Central Lancashire. A number of drop-in centres within Chorley Town Centre, Croston, Clayton Brook and Astley Village have been set up. A Head for Business Course is being held at the Union Street offices every other Friday for individuals looking to start their own business. Over 110 people across Central Lancashire have now attended this course. Following this course, aspiring entrepreneurs move onto one-to-one business planning advice. In September and October 14 individuals received this one-to-one support to assist in achieving their goal of starting a new business.
21. Other key actions and projects for this period were also delivered and include:
- Chorley Council is on the decision making Board for the Lancashire West LAG Rural Business Grants. Three measures of this programme are now being delivered, including: adding value to agriculture and forestry products; diversification into non-agricultural activities; and support, creation and development of micro enterprises. Board members have received training on assessing applications, and the first 2 applications have now been approved. Applicants can receive up to 50% grant funding toward their projects if based in a rural area and will create jobs for local people.
 - The project to develop and deliver a markets action plan has been delivered. Although we are hopeful that the worst part of the recession has ended, Chorley Council and partners continue to deliver bespoke responses as 'business as usual' to support businesses and communities during this difficult economic climate.

22. SERVICE LEVEL BUDGET MONITORING 2009/2010

POLICY & PERFORMANCE

DECEMBER 2009

£'000 £'000

ORIGINAL CASH BUDGET

769

Add Adjustments for In year cash movements
Virements to/from other Services:

Allocation of LSP budgets for 2009/10

55

Virement to Business Directorate for Thermal
Imaging Survey

(2)

Approved Slippage from 2008/09:

Income generated for Chorley Big Picnic

12

CIPFA Corporate Services VFM Review

5

Printing of Chorley Visitor Guide

4

Tuition Fees - CPD

4

IDEA Inspection

3

LSP Groundwork Projects

3

Tuition Fees - CPD

2

33

ADJUSTED CASH BUDGET

855

Less Corporate Savings:

Staffing:

2% saving on pay award

(8)

Vacancy savings

(41)

CURRENT CASH BUDGET

806

FORECAST

EXPENDITURE

Staffing

-

Consultants Fees

(20)

Other

-

**Expenditure under (-) or over (+) current cash
budget**

(20)

INCOME

Consultancy work

5

Income under (+)/ over (-) achieved

5

FORECAST CASH OUTTURN 2009/2010

791

Key Assumptions

Assumed 1% pay award for 2009/10

Key Issues/Variables

Staffing Savings:

Performance Advisor on maternity leave.

Vacant Research Officer post for 2 months.

Performance, Partnership & Equality Manager post vacant for 2 months.

BUSINESS DIRECTORATE

Dec 2009

£'000 £'000

ORIGINAL CASH BUDGET**926**

Add Adjustments for In year cash movements

Virements to/from other Services:

Slippage-£6k of original £10k re LSP and £6.6K for Strategic Housing Consultancy

13

Transfer from Reserves

39

Landscape Project Fees re Town Centre Improvements (Flat Iron)

15

LSP Budget

(20)

Virement From Policy and Performance for Thermal Imaging Survey

2

Virement to People re Contribution to Green Partnership Awards

(2)

Virement to People re Grants To Groundwork Trust

(28)

Virement to Neighbourhoods re Booths Bus Shelter

(3)

ADJUSTED CASH BUDGET**942**

Less Corporate Savings:

2% saving on pay award

(30)

Vacancy saving

(110)

CURRENT CASH BUDGET**802****FORECAST****EXPENDITURE**

>Staff Savings (72)

>Agency Staff 56

>Training Expenses 2

>Mortgage Protection Expenses 65

>DCLG Regional Choice Fund Grant 35

>Markets - Refuse Collection 5

>Markets - Utilities 17

>Search Fees To LCC 5

>Bed & Breakfast, Unsubstantiated CCH invoice (12)

>Bed and Breakfast (9)

>Anchor Trust Contribution 5

>Consultants Fees 68

>Medical Fees (5)

>Legal Fees 10

>LDF Fees 70

>Sub Regional Grant Expenditure 19

>Car Allowances (2)

Expenditure under (-) or over (+) current cash budget**257****INCOME**

>Potential credit to Market traders during work to Markets Buildings 10

>Planning Application Income (199)

>Building Control Income 125

>Business Start Ups Management Fee (2)

>Pre Planning Application Advice Income - (12 months) 5

>Shared Costs with SRBC - Enforcement Officer (12 months) 23

>Cotswold House - Voids 13

>Cotswold shortfall due to later than budgeted transfer 7

>Housing and Planning Delivery Grant	(53)
>Consultancy recharge to BAE	(50)
>Other Income Areas	6
>Housing Renovation Grant Subsidy	1
>Mortgage Rescue Plan	(38)
>Additional DCLG Homelessness Prevention Grant	(15)
>DCLG Court Desk Coverage Grant	(20)
>DCLG Grant	(10)
>DCLG Sub Regional Grant	(30)
>DCLG Regional Choice Fund Grant	(35)
>Local Area Agreement Grant	(2)

Income under (+)/ over (-) achieved

(264)

FORECAST CASH OUTTURN 2009/2010

795

Key Assumptions

Staff Assumptions

- >Building Control Officer, assume vacant post will not be filled this financial year.
- >Planning Officer, 1.4 FTE assume vacant post will not be filled until February 10

- >Markets stall rental income to achieve income budget
- >Assume Planning Application income will average £32.5k per month for the remainder of the financial year.
- >Assume Building Control income will average £15k per month for the remainder of the financial year.
- >Assume Cotswold will fully utilise Agency Budget
- >Assume use of Urban Vision for Planning Applications to finish 1st December
- >Revenue Recharges to Capital Schemes will be achieved

Key Issues/Variables

- >Potential Award of Costs - 605 Preston Rd - Wainhomes have withdrawn the appeal
- >Potential Appeals from Orcheton House Farm and Pontins Ltd following DC Committee 12/01/10.

Key Actions

- >LDF costs estimated.
- >Business Start Ups Grant income and expenditure to be cost neutral to CBC
- >Transfer from Reserves re Town Centre Promotion to be fully Committed

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicator Description	Actual Perf 08/09	Target Qtr 3 09/10	Qtr3 Performance 09/10
Sickness absence Policy & Performance (Lower better)	1.11 fte days	7.24 fte days (per annum)	3.21 fte days
Sickness absence Business Directorate (Lower better)	10.46 fte days	7.24 fte days (per annum)	5.58 fte days
% of undisputed invoices processed within 30 days Policy & Performance (Higher better)	99.46%	97.5%	100%
% of undisputed invoices processed within 30 days Business Directorate (Higher better)	95.25%	97.5%	97.05%
NI 156 – Number of Households in temporary accommodation (Lower better)	24 Households	13 Households	8 Households
NI 157a - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' application types (Higher better)	80.77%	81%	82.35%
NI 157b - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' application types (Higher better)	82.42%	82.5%	83.1%
NI 157c - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' application types (Higher better)	93.62%	92%	93.69%

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE

23. Across the Directorate work is continuing to monitor usage and satisfaction of the building control and planning services by equality strand in order to ensure fair access etc.
24. Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken for the new Housing Allocations Policy and plans are in place to consult the Equality Forum on proposed changes to the Home Assistance Policy in the new year.

25. Following concerns from disability representatives at the Equality Forum with regards to the number and position of A boards, street furniture etc and the potential access issues this causes, in particular blind partially sighted and wheel chair users, a task and finish group has been established which is scheduled to undertake a 'walkabout' of the town centre in the new year. This will result in the development of an action plan to address concerns where possible/feasible.

RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

26. All risks were managed in line with the planned actions and have not been an issue.

VALUE FOR MONEY / EFFICIENCIES UPDATE

27. All efficiency savings are on track.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON
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There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
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