

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Transformation	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	22 March 2010

MONITORING OF INQUIRY RECOMMENDATION – EFFICIENCY GAIN

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the actions taken following the recommendations of the task and finish project into efficiency gains.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note the progress made against the recommendations made.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The report highlights for Members progress against the recommendation made by the inquiry. Importantly progress continues to be good in terms of the Council achieving efficiencies and in terms of the recommendations made by the Panel, most of the recommendations have now been acted upon. For the items where progress has not been made e.g. the role of Members in the Council's change agenda requires further discussion.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

4. To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor performance against their recommendations.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. 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 organization	✓

BACKGROUND

7. The Corporate and Customer Overview Scrutiny Panel undertook an inquiry into efficiency gains made by the Council. An initial report of the findings was accepted by the Executive on the return to update. This report updates the Committee on progress made to date against these recommendations.
8. For completeness and information attached at Appendix A is an update of the Councils progress against NI 179 cash releasing value for money gains since 1 April 2008. The report shows that the Council has more good progress in achieving the efficiency targets set by the Government.
10. The reality is that it is the Councils need to balance the budget rather than the NI 179 that drives the Councils approach to achieving efficiencies.
11. Members should also note that in relation to external inspection the Council during 2009 gained the highest achievable mark from the Audit Commission for its use of resources, one of only two District Councils in the County to achieve this.
12. In respect of the panels recommendations an update is shown below:

Recommendation	Progress to Date
A strategy be prepared setting out how the Council intends to meet the challenging target to reduce the operating costs of the Contact Centre by 25% by 2011.	The Council is currently developing more technology that will encompass a unified desktop that will make the current service operatives much more efficient. We have been successful in attracting grant funding to do this and are leading on working with four other Council's to deliver this product which will be available by June 2010.
A corporate plan setting out our strategic approach be prepared by officers, indicating how the gains demanded through Comprehensive Spending Review 07 will be delivered.	The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy in 2009 and 2010 set out the priority areas for achieving efficiency. Part of the 2010 MTFS is set out in the paper for members.
A strategic approach be taken to service procurement through partnership, collaboration and shared services.	The collaborative service agenda has been incremental rather than wholly strategic. We currently share a number of services and a paper setting out the next steps is included on the agenda for the March Executive Cabinet.
The programme of business process re-engineering (commenced through integration of waste management public contact and the Customer Relationship Management) be continued, to maximise efficiency gains.	See 1 above.
To continue to develop the transactional functionality of the Council's website as part of channel optimisation.	This project has not yet gathered momentum. The strategy is to develop an A-Z of services using a Microsoft platform and this will be replicated across all channels of access into the Council. The Council's web content management system also needs to be changed and we are currently procuring a change in this technology.

Recommendation	Progress to Date
To increase the information relating to efficiency gains presented to the Executive Cabinet.	Efficiency gains/reports are now included in the business plan monitoring statements projects to O and S Committee.
To recognise the drive to Thin Client technology and focus on new ways of working (for example reducing inkjet printers by encouraging two sided copying).	There are now 90 Thin Client users in the Council and the only major service left to accept the technology is Planning Services. This is scheduled to happen within the next 3 months.
To add the transformation agenda to the remit of the member development steering group.	<p>Since the report the Member Support Working Group have considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15/02/2010 Members E-mail, Internet and Telephone Acceptable User Policy 15/06/2009 and 02/02/2009 ICT Update 05/01/2009 Members Mini Laptops and ICT Review 03/11/2008 ICT Review 01/09/2008 Members ICT Review 02/06/2008 Induction and Member Learning Update <p>The creation of intheknow has drastically reduced the amount of paper sent to Members and also led to a more controlled use of email to Members.</p> <p>Several Members have taken up the offer of one to one IT training and a number of Members now have their own mini websites. There have been two Member Learning Sessions on CRM and a number of Members took a recent opportunity to shadow Customer Service Assistants in the Contact Centre.</p>
To implement a sustainable procurement policy and action plan to ensure the Council's commitment to the environment, equality and diversity issues.	The sustainable procurement policy was adopted by the Council on 25 May 2008. This and the Council's approach to equality and diversity are now also embedded in the Council's partnering framework.
To suggest a future scrutiny inquiry topic of the provision of information and communication technology for members and staff.	The topic has not been selected at this moment in time, but will be part of a list of potential topics to be considered at the review of the year event to be held prior to this meeting.
To investigate the inclusion of members in the health and well-being initiatives provided for Council staff.	This has not yet progressed.

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DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Gary Hall	5480	09/03/10	Monitoring of Efficiencies