

BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT FOR THE FINANCE DIRECTORATE

FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2006

1. KEY MESSAGES

In the final quarter of the year, the emphasis of the Directorates work has been:

- Finalising the 2007/08 budget.
- Preparation for the year end closure of the accounts.
- Working further on both the Property Services outsourcing and the Finance Shared Services Feasibility Study.

With regard to the two pieces of work ongoing, both these projects have slipped slightly behind schedule. However, I expect the contract with Liberator to be signed by the middle of June 2007 and the Shared Services Feasibility Study should be completed by the end of the first quarter.

Summary of KPI performance as follows:

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	YEAR END POSITION
Number of green KPI's	6
Number of blue KPI's	6
Number of red KPI's	0
Number of KPI's not yet measured	0

The table shows that overall the performance of the unit was maintained in the final quarter, with all targets being achieved and in many cases exceed. Further details are provided below:

2. BUDGET UPDATE

The outturn figure for 2007/08 will only be available at the end of June. Then will subsequently be reported to the Committee.

3. SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

The key service development in year related to the work undertaken in the followings areas:

- Financial reporting
- Financial management
- Financial standing
- Internal control
- Value for money

A key corporate Project was to improve the Council's performance in these areas. Each year the Audit Commission scores the Council on its performance in these areas and I am pleased to report that the Council improved in many areas. Particularly pleasing was the top score received on value for money, which has been achieved by only two other district Council's in the country.

A further development has been the results of the Benefits Service Satisfaction Survey which is undertaken triennially across all Council's. Again I am pleased to report that though the actions taken and the support of the staff overall satisfaction with the service has improved significantly from what was already a relatively high score.

4. PERFORMANCE VARIATION

Indicator Description	Target	Performance 31/12/06	Comments
% invoices processed on time	96.5	92.1	Blue Circle
% finance budget spend – year end forecast	100	100	Green Star This figure relates to the Finance Directorate only.
Ave time to process new benefit claims	25	19.3	Green Star
% benefit calculations correct	99.0	99.5	Green Star
% Council Tax collected	86.9	86.85	Blue Circle
% NNDR collected	74.25	87.9	Green Star
Finance Sickness Absence	6.75	5.27	Green Star
Number of claimants visited	200	265	Green Star
Number of fraud investigations	40	50	Blue Circle
Number of prosecutions/sanctions	9	11.5	Green Star

The table above shows the performance of individual key indicators. I am pleased to report that all measures, apart from the invoice processing indicator exceeded targets and for number (Green Star) exceeded the target by at least 5%.

Particularly pleasing are the performance improvements in processing benefit claims which is dramatic and places the Council in the 25% in the country. In addition to improve Council tax and NNDR collection is quite an achievement from the high levels that were previously being achieved. The staff have worked particularly hard to achieve this and they should be commended. Their commitment is further endorsed by the low levels of sickness absence also achieved by the Directorate.

5. **CONCLUSION**

The quarter again has proven to be a good one, with performance in the main continuing to be on track. The budget was approved, benefits and Council tax performance continue to be good and a number of key corporate projects has been successfully supported.

In areas where performance is slightly below target, positive action will be taken to try and bring performance back to target level. As previously stated however, the target for corporate invoice processing will not be met. However, to put this into context, performance compared with last year has improved by 10%, but clearly there is more work still to be done in this area.

Signature: _____

GARY HALL
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE