

Report of	Meeting	Date
Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) and Corporate Director of Human Resources (Introduced by the Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet	29 th May 2008

RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY GAINS REPORTS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To respond to the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Absence Management and Efficiency reports.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the Executive Cabinet endorses the response attached to be received by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- To inform Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Executives views and responses to their recommendations contained within the reports.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 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

6. Both reports were presented to Executive Cabinet on the 27th March 2008, which outlined the investigations carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny sub groups and with that contained a number of recommendations to build on the already good practice in place across the Council.

EXECUTIVES RESPONSE

7. Having considered the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Executive accepts all the recommendations made with the exception to a minor amendment to the recommendation regarding Member access to the Health and Wellbeing initiatives currently enjoyed by staff. The Executive accept that there maybe some merit in this and have committed to investigating this rather than implementing as per the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Executive would like to thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their endeavours on these pieces of work, which will lead to further improvements in the Councils performance in these areas. We take particular pleasure in acknowledging the significant improvement in the sickness absence levels, which in part are attributable to the work and focus given to the issues by the Committee and a testament to the Council staff.

We take our response to the recommendations seriously and to demonstrate this we attach at Appendix A and B a summary of the progress against the recommendations to date, further work is required to complete all the recommendations but Officers are aware of this and are taking the necessary actions.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

8. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors' comments are included.

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	X

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY GAINS

9. The implications of the recommendations are all included in the final overview and scrutiny reports.

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

	Action
Employees should speak to their Manager (or nominated officer if manager is not available) when phoning in sick	Actioned
Managers able to activate an 'out of office' message on e mails informing senders that the person is unavailable and who to contact if the message is urgent	ICT are currently working on the practicalities of how this can be implemented

To set an annual target of 8.5 working days lost due to sickness for internal Council use.	Target set at 7.79 days
Return to work interviews should be carried out by Managers on the first day back in work.	Tighter monitoring of return to work interviews is now carried out
To report long term and short term sickness as well as the overall figure	Actioned
To support the implementation of workplace listeners scheme	Currently liaising with the Occupational Health provider to provide training to the workforce listeners prior to implementation
To continue to provide antibacterial hand wash in all toilets and kitchens	Actioned
Encourage staff to take up the Active at Work and new initiatives offered	Further initiatives have been introduced following the appointment of a new Active at Work co-ordinator. Communication of these initiatives has been increased, with greater take up of the activities provided across the Council.
Monitor and feedback on the new Occupational Health contract	Quarterly review meetings are scheduled, with regular monitoring taking place

EFFICIENCY GAINS

Objectives	Action to date
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 including how the Council could reduce the operating cost of the contact centre by 25% by 2011.	The Council already has a planned program of value for money reviews for all Directorates. The reviews will identify potential efficiencies. The contact centre plan will be produced during 2008/09.
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.	To be completed 2008/09
A strategic approach be taken to service procurement through partnership, collaboration and shared services.	The VFM reviews of all the Council's Directorate will establish if opportunities exist for strategic partnering arrangements.
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.	Again the VFM reviews will identify the key business processes to be re-engineered and the potential efficiencies to be gained. The Neighbourhoods VFM review has been completed and the processes identified.
To continue to develop the transactional functionality of the Council's website as part of channel optimisation.	This is a key corporate strategy target to increase and action plans are in place to deliver improvements.



To increase the information relating to efficiency gains presented to the Executive Cabinet.	To be completed during 2008/09
To add the transformation agenda to the remit of the member development steering group.	To be completed during 2008/09
To implement a sustainable procurement policy and action plan to ensure the council's commitment to the environment, equality and diversity issues.	The sustainability procurement policy is part of the Council's climate change strategy to be considered by the May Executive.
To suggest a future scrutiny inquiry topic of the provision of information and communication technology for members and staff.	This has been included in the Overview and Scrutiny Programme for 2008/09
To investigate the inclusion of members in the health and well-being initiatives provided for council staff.	Review to be completed in 2008/09

GARY HALL
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CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are no background papers to this report.

