

Council
Monday 19th November 2007

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Performance

A clear vision for Northampton

Corporate Plan

Work has commenced on the development of the Corporate Plan for 2008 to 2011. The arrival of the new Chief Executive will enable this process to gather pace. Focus groups are being arranged to inform the process by establishing the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Borough Council involving groups selected from our Citizens Panel, Tenants and Residents, Voluntary Organisations, Young People and School children.

This is the first stage of our consultation and engagement activities around the corporate plan and budget process and seeks to facilitate groups through a process of identifying three key priorities for the Council which will help to inform the development of the corporate plan for next year.

An open and efficient council

Performance

The September Monthly Performance Report included the first reported quarterly Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) measured against the harder test that is now being applied. Reports are being provided to individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees to enable them to identify areas requiring improvement which might form part of their future work plan. The purchase of the new Performance Management System has taken place and an implementation plan is being developed in conjunction with the suppliers. We are planning for a 'go live' date on 1st April.

ICT Services

The new Intranet went live on 1st November. This will provide clearer search facilities for key documents and service areas. Training for authors is underway so that content is kept up to date and relevant. The intranet is designed to help us to be more effective in what we do, and the new, modernised site provides links to the BBC news feeds for local and national news, traffic and weather.

Meeting Services

Meeting services have drafted and published new committee report templates. These are now available on the intranet. An "At a Glance" Annual Meeting Cycle has been produced electronically and sent to all members.

A leaflet has been produced for distribution to the public at meetings advising of the roles etc of the various committees and how members of the public can access and address these meetings

Licensing

A 3 year review of the Licensing Act Policy is continuing, as is simultaneously the consultation with regard to the police request for a Cumulative Impact Policy.

The licensing department has contributed recently to a number of multi agency checks to ensure compliance of Liquor and Taxi / Vehicle Hire licence conditions. These checks contribute to the safety of our town centre and the safety of passengers in public hire vehicles.

Legal Services

Legal Services have commenced implementation of IKEN case management software. This will add real efficiencies to work within the section and assist towards achievement of a LEXCEL, the legal quality standard.

The litigation team has obtained a number of possession orders and 4 injunctions working jointly with the Police in anti social behaviour matters. The section has also conducted a number of prosecutions for benefit fraud.

Straightforward, honest leadership

Pay & Grading Review

Progress is on target with regard to completing the Pay and Grading review for 1st April 2008 and resolving Equal Pay Liabilities by 31st December 2007. These are significant projects which have a key impact on the budget for this year and future years in terms of implementing new pay structures. Firmer costings are being developed as the project progresses to feed into budget planning

Attendance Management.

The council's performance still lags behind this year's target. The forecast outturn is approx 10.5 days against a target of 9.5 days, but is still ahead of last years improved performance. The performance for September (revised to 0.89 days lost per full time employee) is an improvement on both the previous 2 months. Controls and management reporting will improve further from Nov with the introduction this month of a new IT system to replace a recording system first installed some years ago.

Appraisal System

The council completed the second year of appraisals earlier this year and a review has taken place of the process and outcomes. Whilst timely completion has improved this year, more focus is required on setting objectives and rating performances. Recommendations are being made to the Management Committee which will be implemented in 2008.

Brian Hoare
November 2007