

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council 24th May 2007
AUTHOR/S: Corporate Manager Policy, Performance and Partnerships/
Improvement Manager

PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007

Purpose

- 1 To enable the Council to
 - a) agree the main elements of the 2007 Performance Plan (given in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2**) taking into account statutory requirements, the Council's priorities and the approved Improvement Plan
 - b) delegate final approval of the 2007 Performance Plan to Cabinet

Background

2. The Council is legally required to publish a Performance Plan by 30th June each year and there are specific matters which must be included.
3. The recent White Paper proposed that the requirement to produce a Performance Plan will cease from 2009. However, there will be further expectations on councils to publish their performance in a transparent way and in particular to demonstrate how they are contributing to LAA targets. The Council will still require a mechanism for planning, agreeing and presenting its improvement plans and some replacement for the Performance Plan in some form will be necessary.
4. Earlier in the year the Cabinet and Council agreed that the Performance Plan for 2007 should be based on the following priorities:-
 - **Improving customer service**
 - **Achieving successful and sustainable communities at Northstowe and other growth areas**
 - **Increasing the supply of affordable housing**
5. It was also agreed that the main areas in which these priorities would be pursued in 2007/08 would be as follows:-
 - (a) Identifying ways to allow service users to have a more active role in influencing service improvements.
 - (b) Setting a small number of realistic performance indicator targets to make incremental improvement in important customer facing services – eg planning applications; searches; benefits; environmental services; and housing repairs.
 - (c) Carrying out a Customer Service Review, six months after the introduction of customer service standards, incorporating complaints and a future programme for Service First
 - (d) Setting and achieving realistic customer service targets for the continuing improvement of the Contact Centre.
 - (e) Setting a target for the number of affordable housing completions

- (f) Setting a target for the percentage of residential planning permissions, which are for affordable housing.
 - (g) Setting up a Community Development Trust for Northstowe or other arrangement for the development and management of community facilities
 - (h) Setting milestones for key stages of LDF, planning permission and Section 106 Agreement for Northstowe.
6. In the last two months services have produced service plans setting out proposals for addressing Council priorities and performance targets for 2007/08. These service plans have been approved at portfolio holder meetings and will form the basis of the 2007 Performance Plan.
7. The Council approved the CGI Improvement Plan on 26th April. The CGI Improvement Plan envisages that over the next few months the Council will develop new objectives and priorities (**for 2008/09 onwards**) and improved approaches to service and performance planning. Nevertheless, it is important throughout the next year for the Council to maintain its focus on current service priorities and performance targets. It would very much count against the Council if its performance indicator position slipped.

Proposed Structure of the Plan

8. In the past, the Performance Plan has been used to provide a broad overview of the position of the Council and has included background information on the district wide context, our resource position, issues for Council services, consultation results etc. It is recommended that in the current circumstances the Plan be more focussed on:-
- The CGI (Inspire) Improvement Plan
 - Priorities for 2007/08 and actions to deliver them
 - PI targets outturns and targets
9. The following structure for the plan is suggested:-
- a) **Introduction**
 - b) **Objectives, Community Strategy and LAA.** A brief summary of our current corporate objectives; links to the Community Strategy; and what we are doing towards the current Local Area Agreement.
 - c) **CGI Improvement Plan.** A summary of the Improvement Plan agreed by the Council on 26th April.
 - d) **Other external inspections.** A summary of the findings of the Planning and Data Quality inspections, together with a summary of the annual Direction of Travel and Use of Resources judgements.
 - e) **Priorities for 2007/08.** Actions and PI targets to deliver 2007/08 priorities – see **Appendix 1**
 - f) **Performance Trends.** An analysis of the Council's overall performance on PIs – both historic trends and comparisons with other authorities.
 - g) **Performance Indicators.** Outturn performance, future targets etc for all national and local PIs
 - h) **Service Plans.** A reference and link to the service plans agreed for all services.
10. This structure would omit material previously included in performance plans on: resources, efficiency, service issues and consultation results (apart from those which are statutory PIs)
11. Much of the above content would be narrative or (as in the case of the CGI

Improvement Plan) has been approved already. The most important new sections of the plan in terms of impact on service delivery (and on which Members views are invited) will be:-

- a) Actions and PI targets to deliver 2007/08 priorities. Proposals (largely drawn from service plans) are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- b) Performance Indicator targets. These are set out in **Appendix 2**. For some PIs outturn performance information for 2006/07 is still not available, but will be included for the final version of the plan.

Advanced copies of these appendices have already been circulated to Members. Some changes have been made in the copies now attached, in the light of revised performance information for 2006/07.

Programme for Approval of the Performance Plan

12. In previous years the final plan has been approved by full Council at its meeting towards the end of June ready to meet the end of June publication deadline. Following the decision to reduce the number of Council meetings, there will not be a Council meeting in June and in this context the Cabinet has recommended the following arrangements:-
 - **Council 24th May:** Council to be recommended to approve the key aspects of the Plan (priorities for 2007/08; performance indicator targets) and to delegate detailed approval of the Performance Plan to Cabinet
 - **Cabinet 14th June:** Approval of Performance Plan for publication, with any final drafting details to be delegated to the portfolio holder for Resources, Staffing, Information and Customer Service.

Financial, Staffing and Risk Implications

13. Financial and staffing implications have already been taken into account in the Council's medium term financial strategy and workforce plan. Risks are built into service plans and service based risk registers.

Recommendations

14. Council is recommended:-
 - (a) To instruct the 2007 Performance Plan to be prepared on the basis of:-
 - i) The previously approved priorities for 2007/08 (customer service, affordable housing and successful, sustainable communities at Northstowe and other growth areas);
 - ii) The proposals in **Appendix 1** to achieve those priorities in 2007/08;
 - iii) The performance indicator targets in **Appendix 2**;
 - iv) The CGI Improvement Plan approved by the Council on 26th April 2007;
 - v) The structure given in paragraph 9, above.
 - (b) To delegate detailed approval of the Performance Plan to the Cabinet for publication by the statutory deadline of 30th June.

Background papers: Improvement Plan and Service Plans

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