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23 September 2009

To: Chairman – Councillor JD Batchelor  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor JA Hockney  
Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee – Councillors Mrs VM Barrett,  
Mrs JM Guest, R Hall, Mrs EM Hezell, MB Loynes, MJ Mason, Mrs DP Roberts,  
Mrs BZD Smith, Mrs JEO Squier and Mrs BE Waters

Quorum: 6

**There is a pre-meeting session at 4.45pm for members of the Committee only, to plan their lines of enquiry.**

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**, which will be held in the **COMMUNAL ROOM - VICARAGE CLOSE SHELTERED HOUSING, MELBOURN** on **THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2009** at **5.30 p.m.**

Members are respectfully reminded that when substituting on committees, subcommittees, and outside or joint bodies, Democratic Services must be advised of the substitution *in advance of* the meeting. It is not possible to accept a substitute once the meeting has started. Council Standing Order 4.3 refers.

Yours faithfully  
**GJ HARLOCK**  
Chief Executive

**The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.**

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#### **AGENDA**

Please note that substitute members need to notify Democratic Services before the start of the meeting of the intended substitution (see paragraph 4.3 of Council Standing Orders).

**PAGES**

#### **PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

- 1. Apologies**  
To receive apologies for absence from committee members.
- 2. Declarations of Interest**  
Please note that the Constitution requires that when considering any decision in respect of which a member of the Committee is subject to a

party whip, the member must declare the existence of the whip. Under the Code of Conduct, any Councillor who has a personal or prejudicial interest should declare this at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meetings** **1 - 10**  
To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meetings held on Thursday 3 September at 2pm and 5:30pm, as a correct record.
4. **Public Questions**
5. **Economic Downturn - Action Plan Update** **11 - 18**
6. **Value for Money** **19 - 20**
7. **Performance Improvement Strategy (Key)** **21 - 42**  
Cabinet will be asked to endorse the strategy at its 8 October 2009 meeting. Members are asked to note that an Equality Impact Assessment on this Strategy will have been conducted before the Cabinet meeting and the outcome reported orally.
8. **Sustainability, Procurement and Efficiency Portfolio Holder Presentation**
9. **Monitoring the Executive**  
Monitors are invited to inform the Committee of any issues that may warrant further investigation, which occurred at one of the following portfolio holder meetings:
 

Portfolio	Date of meeting	Monitor
Finance & Staffing	8 September 2009	Cllr R Hall Cllr MB Loynes
Housing	16 September 2009 23 September 2009	Cllr JM Guest Cllr EM Heazell
Planning and New Communities	1 October 2009	Cllr VM Barrett Cllr R Hall
Sustainability, Procurement and Efficiency	24 September 2009	Cllr MJ Mason Cllr BZD Smith
10. **Draft Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions** **43 - 48**  
October's Forward Plan of Key Decisions can be accessed on the Council's website:  
<http://scambsmoderngov.co.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=238&RP=293>
11. **To Note the Dates of Future Meetings**  
**2009:** 5 November & 3 December  
**2010:** 7 January; 4 February; 4 March & 1 April.  
All meetings will begin at 5.30pm.

The next meeting will take place at Orchard Park Community Centre.

**Exclusion of Press and Public**

The law allows Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. Typically, such issues relate to personal details, financial and business affairs, legal privilege and so on. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them. The following statement will be proposed, seconded and voted upon.

"I propose that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item number(s) ..... in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) ..... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act."

If exempt (confidential) information has been provided as part of the agenda, the Press and public will not be able to view it. There will be an explanation on the website however as to why the information is exempt.

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL**

While the District Council endeavours to ensure that visitors come to no harm when visiting South Cambridgeshire Hall, those visitors also have a responsibility to make sure that they do not risk their own or others' safety.

### **Security**

Members of the public attending meetings in non-public areas of the Council offices must report to Reception, sign in, and at all times wear the Visitor badges issued. Before leaving the building, such visitors must sign out and return their Visitor badges to Reception.

### **Emergency and Evacuation**

In the event of a fire, a continuous alarm will sound. Evacuate the building using the nearest escape route; from the Council Chamber or Mezzanine viewing gallery this would be via the staircase just outside the door. Go to the assembly point at the far side of the staff car park.

- **Do not** use the lifts to exit the building. If you are unable to negotiate stairs by yourself, the emergency staircase landings are provided with fire refuge areas, which afford protection for a minimum of 1.5 hours. Press the alarm button and wait for assistance from the Council fire wardens or the fire brigade.
- **Do not** re-enter the building until the officer in charge or the fire brigade confirms that it is safe to do so.

### **First Aid**

If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please alert a member of staff.

### **Access for People with Disabilities**

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you. All meeting rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities on each floor of the building. Hearing loops and earphones are available from reception and can be used in all meeting rooms.

### **Toilets**

Public toilets are available on each floor of the building next to the lifts.

### **Recording of Business**

Unless specifically authorised by resolution, no audio and / or visual or photographic recording in any format is allowed at any meeting of the Council, the executive (Cabinet), or any committee, sub-committee or other sub-group of the Council or the executive.

### **Banners, Placards and similar items**

No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

### **Disturbance by Public**

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

### **Smoking**

Since 1 July 2008, the Council has operated a new Smoke Free Policy. Visitors are not allowed to smoke at any time within the Council offices, or in the car park or other grounds forming part of those offices.

### **Food and Drink**

Vending machines and a water dispenser are available on the ground floor near the lifts at the front of the building. Visitors are not allowed to bring food or drink into the meeting room.

### **Mobile Phones**

Visitors are asked to make sure that their phones and other mobile devices are set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings or are switched off altogether.

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on  
Thursday, 3 September 2009

PRESENT: Councillor JD Batchelor – Chairman  
Councillor JA Hockney – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	Mrs VM Barrett	R Hall
	Mrs EM Heazell	Dr DR de Lacey (substitute for Councillor Mason)
	MB Loynes	Mrs DP Roberts
	Mrs BZD Smith	Cllr Mrs JEO Squier
	Mrs BE Waters	

Councillors SM Edwards, MP Howell, Mrs HM Smith and TJ Wotherspoon were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers:	Holly Adams	Democratic Services Officer
	Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
	Steve Rayment	Head of ICT
	Jackie Sayers	Scrutiny Development Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs JM Guest and MJ Mason.

**18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**19. CALL-IN: GOVERNMENT CONNECT: COUNCILLORS' E-MAIL OPTIONS**

The Chairman introduced this item on the call-in of the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder's decision, to retain webmail e-mail accounts for all Councillors and to switch off the auto-forwarding of messages to personal addresses, by informing the Committee that its task was to:

- Determine whether the correct decision making procedure had been followed;
- Decide whether the portfolio holder's decision was a rational one.

**Government Connect Code of Connection (CoCo)**

The Head of ICT explained that the CoCo document included 91 provisions, of which the requirement for a secure e-mail system was only one. He explained that due to this Government instruction the Council would no longer be allowed to automatically forward a message to a personal e-mail address as the Authority could not vouch for the security of those external e-mail providers. It was noted that if the Council did not comply with the instruction in the CoCo document the Government could refuse to share information with the Council, which would have a detrimental effect on the Council's services. It was understood that the overwhelming majority of Councils had already complied with the CoCo instruction. The Head of ICT advised that the Government would be launching the fourth version of the CoCo shortly.

It was suggested that more warning should have been given to Members about the issues involved regarding this decision, as the CoCo was published in July 2008. In response the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder explained that the Council had considered this matter in April 2007 and, more recently, Members had been informed of the forthcoming decision at the 23 April 2009 Council meeting and in the Weekly

Bulletin. Additionally, the Portfolio Holder had delayed making a decision to ensure that all Councillors were consulted. It was suggested that a decision with implications for all Councillors should not be taken at short notice in August when many were on holiday.

### **History**

Councillor Edwards explained that as the Portfolio Holder responsible for ICT in 2007, he had taken the decision not to require all Councillors to use webmail on the grounds that it would have inconvenienced Members unnecessarily. He added that, had the Government issued the CoCo document two years ago, he would have taken a different decision.

### **Consultation**

The Portfolio Holder explained that whilst he had known of the issue for some time, he had only recently been made aware of the pressing need to take a decision. It was understood that, as this had not been a key decision, it was not required to be on the Council's Forward Plan.

### **Consultation group**

Disappointment was expressed that the pilot group of Councillors, first suggested in April 2007, was not formed before this decision was taken. It was understood that three Councillors had volunteered and tested the system in 2007, but that based on their feedback the Portfolio Holder had decided not to proceed to requiring all members to use webmail at that time, although since 2007 more than 20 members had since begun to use the system. It was noted that this matter had been discussed by the ICT Steering Group, which consisted of senior officers and the Portfolio Holder. It was suggested that had the Committee received prior notification it could have set up a task and finish group to examine this issue. Members also suggested that the ICT Steering Group should include more Member representation, especially when discussing issues that impacted on them.

### **Training**

Committee members expressed concern that had the decision been implemented, Councillors would have been unable to access their e-mails as they had not received training on how to use the new system. In response the Portfolio Holder explained that training had been offered on the webmail system and if the decision were agreed training would be provided, with one-to-one sessions if necessary, before the decision was implemented and the auto-forwarding system switched off. It was suggested that training should provide instruction on how to use the webmail system, as well as how to login.

### **Using the system**

The Portfolio Holder explained that Councillors already accessed the Council's secure site to view the Authority's performance on CorVu and its minutes and agendas on Modern.Gov. Access to e-mail would also be provided on this site. He informed the Committee that almost half of all Councillors were currently using webmail and would be unaffected by the change. Councillor Loynes stated that the webmail was easy to use and that the ICT Section had responded promptly his queries.

### **Alternative solutions**

It was suggested that the Portfolio Holder should have given more consideration to alternative solutions, which would allow Councillors to keep using their personal e-mail addresses for Council business. These included setting up encryption software on all Councillors' computers or purchasing a new server which could act as a "Demilitarised Zone". The Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder explained that he had considered these alternatives and had rejected them as being too expensive. Members of the

Committee asked for a cost comparison between the option agreed by the Portfolio Holder and the training it necessitated, and the two alternative options suggested above.

### **Separate e-mails**

The opinion of Committee members was divided on whether it was preferable to have separate e-mail systems for personal correspondence and Council-related business.

### **Learning points**

Members of the Committee made the following points, to assist future decision making:

- The Portfolio Holder should have informed Members before taking a decision that the Council was required to implement this process, to allow Councillors to prepare for the changes it would bring.
- More effort was required to ensure that Councillors were aware of the implications of any decisions which affected their working practice.
- Training should have been provided before the decision had been taken.
- With prior warning the Committee could have set up a task and finish group on this matter to ensure Councillor ownership of this issue.

The Committee unanimously **agreed** that the correct decision making procedure had been followed.

The Committee then took a vote on whether the decision was rational and so should be implemented and by 7 votes to 4 the Committee

**AGREED** with the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder's decision that Council "owned" SCDC email accounts be retained for all Members (no auto-forwarding to personal addresses allowed.)

It was evident that Councillors had not understood the implications of the decision and so the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that this needed to be addressed by both Members and officers.

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**The Meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.**

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on  
Thursday, 3 September 2009

PRESENT: Councillor JD Batchelor – Chairman  
Councillor JA Hockney – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Mrs VM Barrett Dr DR de Lacey  
R Hall Mrs EM Heazell  
MB Loynes Mrs DP Roberts  
Mrs BZD Smith Mrs JEO Squier  
Mrs BE Waters

Councillors MP Howell and NIC Wright were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers: Patrick Adams Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Philip Aldis Community Safety Officer  
Gemma Barron Partnerships Manager  
Rick Hylton Vice-Chairman of Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership  
John Reynolds Chairman of Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership  
Chris Savage Cambridgeshire Constabulary  
Jackie Sayers Scrutiny Development Officer  
Neil Weston Partnership Support Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs JM Guest and MJ Mason.

**21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor JD Batchelor declared a personal interest in item 6 of the agenda, as an elected member of the Police Authority.

**22. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July were agreed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of the first bullet point on paragraph 4 to read:  
“The subsidising of the rent and charges paid by Sheltered Housing residents ...”

**23. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

**24. PRESENTATION BY MATTHEW WINN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Matthew Winn, Managing Director of Cambridgeshire Community Services, gave a presentation on the services his organisation provided, which included a range of NHS and social care services in the Cambridgeshire area, commissioned by and accountable to the Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust.

**NHS Trust**

Matthew Winn explained that the Cambridgeshire Community Services and the Primary Care Trust planned to become an NHS Trust by April 2010, with the establishment of a Community Foundation Trust, as a future aim. Being an NHS Trust will allow the organisation to compete with other health providers.

**Demand for savings**

Matthew Winn explained that annual funding from the Government, which in previous years had been over 2%, had dropped to 0.7%. This made cost savings inevitable. It was possible that some service provision could be contracted out if a private sector provider could fulfil the same service more efficiently. Other possible savings could be delivered by providing services in the community, instead of at a hospital. It was noted that the 3 year pay award was coming to an end and future negotiations would have an impact on the budget.

**Areas of deprivation**

It was noted that whilst the life expectancy for those who lived in Cambridgeshire was higher than average, Fenland's life expectancy was lower than average. The Committee requested that in future data be presented by District, instead of by County, as this would have more meaning for residents and their elected representatives.

It was suggested that it would be more efficient to have the same provider service provider for adults and children.

**Case referral to other counties**

It was understood that General Practitioners referred cases with social care elements and those living close to the county border could be referred to a service provider in another county. Concern was expressed that this could lead to different standards in care for residents from the same village.

**Occupational Health**

Matthew Winn explained that Occupational Health prioritised their cases and urgent referrals were responded to within 2 days. It was asserted that the waiting times for some non-urgent referrals were unacceptable and Matthew Winn requested that he be provided with details of any specific cases outside the meeting.

Matthew Winn reported that his organisation had a good working relationship with South Cambridgeshire District Council and he had no concerns to report to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Matthew Winn and Karen Mason for attending the meeting and providing the Committee with such informative answers.

**25. REPORT FROM THE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP**

County Councillor John Reynolds, Member of the Cambridgeshire Police Authority, presented this report as the Chairman of the South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, by emphasising that South Cambridgeshire's crime rate was considerably lower than the national average, which made the Partnership's crime reduction targets more challenging. It was noted that the Committee would receive a report from the Partnership twice a year. It was understood that the Partnership also reported to the South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership Board.

**Responding to the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter**

Concern was expressed at the findings in the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter which found that performance on reducing crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour had been poor. Councillor John Reynolds reported that whilst the Partnership accepted the comments in the Letter on the increase of crime levels, this trend was reflected at both county and national levels. In response to the local increase in burglary, which was reflected nationally, an awareness campaign had been launched to promote the

measures that residents themselves could take to prevent crime.

### **Value for money**

The Community Safety Officer explained that this year the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership had a budget of £121,000, just over £90,000 of which came through the County Local Area Agreement. In response to concerns about value for money, Councillor John Reynolds explained that reducing the hours of two full-time officers to part-time had provided savings that could be spent on other community safety projects.

### **Prolific and Priority Offender Scheme (PPO scheme)**

Inspector Chris Savage of the Cambridge Constabulary explained that the PPO scheme had been successful in addressing repeat offenders often responsible for burglary and that although it would be desirable to provide the same level of service for all offenders when released from prison, more funding at a County level would be required to enact this.

### **Place survey**

Members of the Committee expressed surprise at the results of the Place Survey, which stated that only 17.4% of people saw anti-social behaviour as a problem. Councillor John Reynolds explained that 1,100 people were interviewed for the Place Survey and the questions were set by the Government. Concern was expressed at the fact that only 26.6% of those surveyed feel that the police and their partners are successfully dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues, although it was noted that this was the second highest figure of all the districts in the county.

### **Crime deterrents**

It was noted that it was very difficult to assess the effectiveness of a crime prevention initiative. For example, Inspector Chris Savage explained that there was evidence that Smart Water was an effective deterrent as criminals were aware of its use. He conceded that levels of crime detection resulting from such an initiative did not necessarily reflect its usefulness. A member of the Committee suggested that postcode engraving was a more cost effective crime prevention measure.

### **Crime reduction conference**

The Community Safety Officer explained that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Anti-Social Behaviour Information Event would be held on 29 September 2009 in the Council Chamber. He agreed to provide Councillors with a further copy of the details, which had been sent to Members on previous occasions.

### **Vehicle crime**

At the request of the Committee, the Community Safety Officer agreed to report back on paragraph 1.3.1, which stated that vehicle crime had decreased but included data which suggested an increase.

### **Domestic violence**

It was agreed that the report should have indicated whether the 67 repeat incidents represented an increase or decrease.

### **Working with parish councils**

It was suggested that regular police attendance at parish council meetings would greatly assist the police in imparting local knowledge important to crime reduction. It was also stated that a visit or phone call was preferable to an e-mail when responding to victims of crime. Inspector Chris Savage explained that the police were sometimes prevented from fully updating elected representatives on an incident, as this would involve the

sharing of personal information.

In conclusion Councillor John Reynolds explained that it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of crime prevention measures, especially as the latest available crime figures were always months out of date.

The Committee agreed that there were still considerable concerns regarding that performance of the South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and that they would like to invite the Chairman of the Partnership to return later in the civic year.

## **26. PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER PRESENTATION**

Councillor NIC Wright, Planning Portfolio Holder, gave a brief verbal update on the challenges facing his portfolio for the rest of the municipal year.

### **Building Control survey**

The Building Control survey was unsatisfactory and so a new survey was being carried out later this year.

### **Planning applications determined by officers**

It was noted that the target of 95% of planning applications to be determined by officers would not be met this year. The Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities stated that the target should have been 90%, which was in line with the Government's recommendation.

### **Chairman's delegation**

It was noted that the Planning Committee in October would decide on the future of Chairman's delegation, an issue that had been discussed at length at June's Scrutiny Committee meeting. It was unclear if the legal advice that parish councillors could not attend these meetings remained unchanged.

### **Updates on planning applications**

Councillor Wright explained that planning officers were very busy and this possibly explained why parish councils were not being kept fully up to date on the state of planning applications in their parish.

### **Travellers**

Councillor Wright explained that the issue of Travellers did not come under his portfolio. However, he informed the Committee that the Council were losing planning appeals because alternative sites could not be offered. The Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities added that the Council was making progress in clearing illegal sites, but this would become much more difficult if the authority did not co-operate with the Government over the provision of additional Travellers' sites. It was noted that the original number of pitches had been 200 but this had been reduced to 89, through the lobbying of the Council.

### **Acceptance of planning applications**

Concern was expressed at the registration of poorly prepared planning applications and it was suggested that the minimum standard of acceptance should be consistently applied. The Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities stated that he was looking at ways to improve this process.

### **Parish Plans**

The Partnerships Manager explained that the South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic

Partnership provided funding to support communities develop Parish Plans (now known as Community-Led Plans) and were liaising with Cambridgeshire ACRE regarding the implementation of the recommendations in the Plans.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Wright and the Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities for their attendance and informative answers.

## **27. MONITORING THE EXECUTIVE**

The Scrutiny Monitors gave reports on the following portfolio holder meetings.

### **Finance and Staffing on 25 August 2009**

Councillor Hall reported that staff turnover was currently at a level of 5.5, which was seen as too low. Flexible retirement for staff, which would allow staff to reduce their hours and start claiming part of their pension was discussed. The projected overspend in the General Fund had increased to £358,000, whilst savings of £325,000 would be identified at a later date.

### **Housing on 11 August 2009**

Councillor Heazell reported that the main item of business had been the recommendation to Cabinet that the properties at Frog End, Shepreth be transferred to a Housing Association as the capital receipts for sale on the private market could not be ring-fenced for affordable housing in the village. Councillor Heazell expressed her concern regarding the rescheduling of these portfolio holder meetings and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman agreed to raise this issue with the Leader.

### **Planning and New Communities 1 September 2009**

Councillor Hall reported that the main issue of discussion was the decision of the Planning Portfolio Holder to charge a fee for the pre-application planning process for strategic, major and minor developments, charges to be made for written advice and meeting with the relevant planning officer.

The Committee **noted** that it had already received a written report from Councillor Smith on the Sustainability, Procurement and Efficiency Portfolio Holder meeting on 23 July 2009.

## **28. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

It was agreed that the Chairman should liaise with the Scrutiny Development Officer to consider how the Committee could add value to the decision making process with regard to Chairman's Delegation, which would be discussed at the Planning Committee of 7 October 2009.

## **29. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee **NOTED** the following future meeting dates:

**2009:** 1 October at Melbourn; 5 November at Orchard Park and 3 December at Haslingfield.

**2010:** 7 January at Great Shelford; 4 February at the Council's Offices at Cambourne; 4 March at Linton and 1 April at Foxton.

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**The Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.**

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	SMT	23 September 2009
<b>AUTHOR/S:</b>	Corporate Manager	

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**ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE DISTRICT DURING THE RECESSION - QUARTERY UPDATE****Purpose**

1. This report seeks to inform Scrutiny Committee 01 October 2009 (and Cabinet in 08 October 2009) with an update on the delivery of actions proposed to mitigate the impact of the recession on businesses in South Cambridgeshire.

This is not a key decision.

**Progress Report for Period 1 July – 30 September 2009**

2. The table below details the progress made against actions identified in the Cabinet Report of 16 April 2009 and following the up-date report to 30 June 2009 to Cabinet in early July 2009. Key activities since this time are:
  - The volume of invoices paid within 10 days improved to 63.11% in July, with a decrease in the summer period (August) of 39.75%.
  - The Business Support Fund with a total value of £50,000 aimed at supporting companies most at risk from the slowing economy has been launched from September 2009. With vouchers per qualifying company of £1,000, it is delivered in partnership with Business Link across the district. Monthly reports to the Council will inform of both uptake and the type of specialist support accessed, followed by following up intelligence with businesses in term of effectiveness.
  - As reported verbally at the previous Cabinet meeting, the business seminar 'Ride the Recession' arranged for 1 July took place. Run in association with Business Link, the event offered the opportunity to hear from Terry Holloway of Marshall Group, Matthew Peek of Barclays Corporate, Anne Miller of The Creativity Group and consultants Bev and Jasper Gilder, all offering advice on how to survive and thrive in all economic climates. The event also provided networking and advice from business support agencies. Feedback was very positive. For example, Delegate Julia Brooks from contacts4business said, "I enjoyed the event for its presentations, as well as the exhibitions and networking. I found the experience motivating and informative with practical application for my business."

- The measure to do with the Hardship Rate Relief Scheme have resulted in three requests for assistance. Two applications have been returned so far, of which one currently meets the criteria and is expected to be awarded at a cost of £1,750, to the Council (£7,000 total rate relief requested) A further query for a third application is expected by the Revenues department. If granted the cost to the Council is anticipated to be £1,250 (£5,000). Further applications are anticipated.

**Summary of Council Actions and Progress to date:**

Actions and evaluation	Timescale	Cost	Progress to date and evaluation
<p>1. Hardship Rate Relief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicising the existing scheme</li> <li>Review the existing policy to facilitate the award of rate relief to assist businesses at imminent risk of failure and to ensure a fair allocation process an agreed budget</li> </ul> <p><b>Future action suggested:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further publicity may be helpful to highlight the scheme.</li> <li>Upon offering relief, the businesses to benefit will be made a conditional offer that they develop actions to recover, including developing a plan with Business Link.</li> <li>The amount of this measure will be reviewed at the end of October 2009.</li> </ul>	<p>Available over 2009/10</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p>	<p>£25,000</p>	<p>Scheme available.</p> <p>1 request received for hardship support at a cost of £1,750 to SCDC. A further application with a cost of £1,250 to SCDC is anticipated.</p>
<p>2. Freeze fees for taxi licensing, trade refuse collection and other environmental health services as recommended by the Portfolio Holder 27 January 2009</p>	<p>Available over 2009/10</p>	<p>£15,500</p>	<p>In place – Completed.</p>
<p>3. Lobby Minister for Local Government regarding NNDR and Minister for Energy regarding fuel poverty issues.</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Minister's response received.</p>
<p>4. Economic Development Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'How to Win Contracts' "event with other public authorities at the Belfry Hotel, Cambourne</li> </ul>	<p>4 June 2009</p>	<p>£3,000</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Attended by 100 businesses (target 70-80). Positive feedback received on practical value of the event.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Seminar on surviving the economic downturn at Duxford IWM</li> <li>Business Support Growth Fund with vouchers of £1,000 each launched and delivered with Business Link. This offers direct specialist business support for businesses affected by the recession.</li> </ul> <p><b>Future action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly reports to the Council will inform of both uptake and the type of specialist support accessed, with a view to inform the Council of support needed by the District's businesses for possible future Council measures.</li> </ul>	<p>1 July 2009</p> <p>September 2009 – March 2010</p>	<p>£5,000</p> <p>£50,000</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Positive feedback received on practical value of the event.</p> <p>Launched. Applications anticipated. Monthly reports to the Council will inform of both uptake and the type of specialist support accessed.</p>
<p>5. Develop financial options to help development continue at Orchard Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot C3 transferred to affordable housing from market sales. BPHA funded by HCA, with support by SCDC.</li> <li>Persimmon Homes commenced work on Plot B1, as result of transfer to C3 to BPHA. Martin Grant have commenced work on Plot D.</li> <li>Application for HCA Kickstart funding submitted</li> <li>Further work planned with partners on the private rented sector and self build/eco housing options.</li> <li>Construction started on 3 new sites since April.</li> </ul> <p><b>Future action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study commissioned for innovative delivery models with meeting set up about a private rented initiative.</li> </ul>	<p>April 2009</p> <p>May 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>November 2009-09</p>	<p>HCA funding provided</p>	<p>All three house-builders are back on site, and higher level of reservations than last year.</p> <p>Project bids were unsuccessful. Will look to resubmit in winter 2009.</p>

6. Provide rent-free space for CAB at SCDC	March 2009	Within existing budgets	Offered – but unlikely to take up offer without financial grant to cover additional costs for CAB
<p>7. SCDC staff:</p> <p>Financial well being event to signpost staff to appropriate organisations who can offer counselling and practical advice for themselves and family members</p> <p>Offer short-term projects to existing staff rather than agency staff</p> <p>Revise the staff relocation terms so that the sums available can be used flexibly, without increasing the total claimed.</p> <p>Human Resources organised publicity on PPC (Positive People Company) to aid staff in the recession. Support is offered through counselling on various matters.</p>	<p>April 2009</p> <p>February 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>August 2009</p>	<p>£2,000</p> <p>Potential saving</p> <p>Potential saving if new staff can be retained whilst unable to sell former home</p>	<p>In place, completed</p> <p>In place, ongoing</p> <p>Work has commenced</p> <p>Action completed</p>
<p>8. Aim to pay suppliers within 20 days</p> <p><b>Future action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that we reinforce the message again about processing invoices promptly including the importance of the dispute process.</li> <li>• That the electronic system of invoicing be implemented as soon as possible, thus benefitting businesses in turn.</li> </ul>	February 2009 - ongoing	Up to 10 days interest on sums paid	<p>Chief Executives has sent a message to all staff at launch of action requesting 80% of payments in 10 days.</p> <p>Follow up communication suggested to increase payment rate to more than 39.75% (August 2009) and 60.3%</p>
9. Small businesses that are identified as likely to benefit from rate relief will be targeted and encouraged to apply for this benefit	September 2009	Within approved budgets	Letter sent to businesses and communications in the current Economic News Bulletin.

10. Improve ways of helping firms relocate to South Cambridgeshire, including property search and identification systems	September – December 2009	£10,000	Meetings held with Invest East of England regarding inward investment. Meetings and discussions also held with the tourism office, neighbouring councils, businesses and commercial agents to develop a tool/mechanism for improved investment. A commercial property database is being developed with colleagues to show available commercial space and market the District
11. Planning Policy SPD/DPD to be produced to strengthen support for economic development	March 2010? TBC		To be included within the review of core strategy.
<b>Proposed Actions</b>			
<p>12. Support to local volunteer centres experiencing increased demand for placements as a result of the recession.</p> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Volunteer Services are seeing increases in the number of people referred to them through the Department of Work and Pensions scheme (generally clients who need more support), which only pays out if a client is successfully placed and therefore much work can occur for no additional funding (just over £100 per placed client).</li> <li>• The Volunteer Centres have not received Weather the Storm funding.</li> <li>• Specific measures for South Cambridgeshire to be developed with approval of this new measure.</li> </ul>	October 2009	Up to £5,000	This is proposed to be part of the contingency funding money. Volunteering is a means for people to gain skills and return to jobs following redundancy etc.

<p>13. Further measures to support businesses and the District in the economic downturn.</p> <p><b>Evaluation and future proposed actions;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measures are being explored with partners such as the Chamber of Commerce (e.g. stimulate innovation) and Job Centre Plus as well as internally (e.g. invoice system additional costs) to develop actions to assist the District further in responding to the downturn.</li> </ul>	TBC	TBC	This is proposed to be part of the contingency funding money.

### Implications

3.	Financial	<p>Council made available total of £150,000 to aid businesses in South Cambs affected by the recession.</p> <p>At September, £110,500 has been spent or committed. This figure includes commitments arising from NNDR hardship relief applications.</p> <p>A contingency fund of £39,500 is available to be allocated to further initiatives as detailed above.</p>
	Legal	No implications
	Staffing	No Implications
	Risk Management	No Implications
	Equal Opportunities	No Implications

### Consultations

4. In preparing this report the Finance, Revenues and Benefits and Human Resources services have contributed.

### Effect on Strategic Aims

5.	<p><b>Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.</b></p> <p>Many of the measures outlined in this report are based on feedback from partner agencies, businesses and local residents, and are intended to support our aim of providing excellent services. A pro-active approach is being taken to the promotion of these measures.</p>
	<p><b>Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.</b></p>

<p>There are well-documented links between economic prosperity, health, wellbeing and community safety. The measures in this report are intended to maintain the local economy.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.</b></p> <p>It is hoped that local residents will welcome actions that the council is taking to support businesses through the recession.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.</b></p> <p>The Council's commitment to support businesses through the recession is a key element of the authority's pledge to assist in providing jobs and prosperity across the district for all residents.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.</b></p> <p>Small businesses form a key part of the life of a strong rural community.</p>

**Conclusions/Summary**

6. This report provides Cabinet with a brief update on the current position with regard to activities being undertaken to support local businesses during the recession. A further report will be presented to Cabinet in October.

**Recommendations**

7. It is recommended that Scrutiny Committee note the report intended for Cabinet on 08 October 2009 and the measures intended to assist the District economically.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Cabinet Reports: 15 January, 12 February, 16 April and 2 July 2009

**Contact Officer:** Nicole Kritzinger – Economic Development Officer  
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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny & Overview Committee 1 October 2009  
**AUTHOR:** Alex Colyer, Executive Director Corporate Services  
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Simon Edwards

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**VALUE FOR MONEY****Purpose**

1. This is the first of two reports to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee regarding value for money provided by South Cambridgeshire District Council. This report aims to support the committee in planning how to examine the Council's vfm record. The second, in December, will present the evidence and recommend the next steps.

**Options**

2. The committee is recommended to agree that the existing Finance task and finish group be tasked to examine the evidence regarding the Council's value for money record and to report their findings to the December meeting.

**Background**

3. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee set up a cross-party task and finish group in June 2008 to "investigate and make recommendations for improving the Council's financial management, and budget setting processes, and to recommend improvements to future scrutiny of the budget and integrated business reports".
4. As part of its work, the task and finish group found that the 2008 Place Survey showed that only 33% of South Cambridgeshire respondents were satisfied with the value for money that they received from their District Council. This was despite the fact that the Council has the 12<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of council tax amongst all District Councils and over one quarter of our services are in the top quartile of performance nationally.
5. The task and finish group made an interim report in March 2009, stating that it would resume work as soon as a lead officer was available to support further work. The officer will be in post from 1 October 2009.

**Value for money at South Cambridgeshire District Council**

6. There are several tools available to the Council to measure costs, performance and value for money, all of which will be available in the coming two months.
7. Amended Place Survey results were published on 23 September.
8. The medium term financial strategy will be examined by the Cabinet on 8 October.
9. The Council's new performance management software, Corvu, will supply performance data for the first two quarters by mid-October.

- 10. The Audit Commission's assessment of the Council's Use of Resources score has been delayed but is now expected in November.
- 11. Officers are currently drafting the 2010/11 service plans. These will include a wealth of up-to-date benchmarking data.
- 12. Communication of the Council's value for money record is currently being examined by the Council's senior management team and a report is expected by November.
- 13. Once the above data is available, the task and finish group will be in a position to make a judgement about the Council's value for money record, and recommend actions for the future.

14. **Implications**

Financial	None
Legal	None
Staffing/ capacity	A lead officer to support the Finance task and finish group takes up the post on 1 October 2009
Risk Management	Failing to establish and publicise the Council's vfm record presents a reputational risk.
Equal Opportunities	None

**Consultation**

- 15. None.

**Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives**

- 16. Improvements to the Council's financial planning, scrutiny and consultation will help to "deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community".

**Options**

- 17. The committee is recommended to agree that the existing Finance task and finish group be tasked to examine the evidence regarding the Council's value for money record and to report their findings to the December meeting.

Contact Officer: Alex Colyer, Executive Director Corporate Services

Contact Member: Cllr Simon Edwards, Finance Portfolio Holder





# **PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**

**2009 – 2012**

Version 6 – October 2009

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3	<b>Where do we want to be?</b> What are performance management and performance improvement? Where do we want to be by 2012? What needs to be in place for effective performance improvement? Objectives of the strategy.
4	<b>Performance Improvement Culture.</b> What sort of performance management culture will best provide the Council with the performance breakthrough which will achieve our aims?
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### APPENDIX 1 – ACTION PLAN

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a Council, we are here to provide the best possible services to the area we serve within the resources available and other constraints we have to work within. Performance improvement is about seeking to improve the services and quality of life enjoyed by residents and affects all aspects of how the Council goes about that task. So, for example, performance improvement is concerned with setting clear priorities; ensuring that services meet the needs of those who use them; producing clear plans to deliver improving services; achieving value for money; effective team working to deliver those plans; reviewing progress; celebrating our successes and learning from our mistakes.
- 1.2 Everyone connected with the Council has a role to play in improving performance. It is something we do every day in all aspects of our work.
- 1.3 Effective performance improvement brings a wide range of benefits. For example, people who live and work in the district gain from better services. Councillors are better able to meet the needs of their constituents. Employees gain greater job satisfaction; enjoy a more positive and creative working environment; and gain opportunities to learn and develop. Partner organisations see the Council as a better organisation to work with.
- 1.4 The Council already has a great deal in place. The Council's Aims and Values reflect a commitment to improve services. The Council has introduced systems such as service planning; performance and development reviews (appraisals); quarterly performance monitoring; management competencies; and risk management. Investors in People (IIP) accreditation was achieved in March 2009. Work is being undertaken to improve staff engagement and motivation to build the commitment and team working across the Council required for performance improvement.
- 1.5 In this strategy -
- Performance Management** is taken to be the activity of Executive Members, managers and team leaders in improving the performance of their teams, often focused on performance indicators.
- Performance Improvement** more broadly addresses the systems and cultures of the Council in all aspects of delivering better services to the public.
- 1.6 This strategy seeks to promote an inclusive and positive approach to performance improvement based on the Council Values and where all staff and Members are motivated and empowered to maximise the contribution they can make to improving services. The strategy has been developed by the Performance Improvement Group; it reviews our progress; brings together the various areas of work contributing to performance improvement; and sets a clear direction for our future work.

## **2. Where are we now?**

### **Performance Trends and the National Performance Framework**

- 2.1 The 2006 CGI inspection commented that performance management was inconsistent across the Council. It depended on the individual service and lacked corporate focus. Since then, the Council has sharpened up prioritisation; improved service planning and appraisals; strengthened quarterly reporting; and has introduced the computerised performance management system (Corvu). Performance management was one of the areas assessed as having promising prospects for improvement in the 2008 CGI re-inspection.
- 2.2 In 2007/08, the last year of Best Value (BV) performance indicators, the Council had 52% of PIs in the top two quartiles of all district councils and 65% had improved since the previous year. Many Council services are performing very well and are among the best in the country. However, in other cases performance, as measured against BV indicators, has been more inconsistent. Hence, the Council's overall rate of improvement on the BV indicator set against other councils improved only marginally in the last three to four years. This might be for a variety of reasons. In some cases the national indicator set did not reflect what was important in South Cambridgeshire. Some services could point to a high level of performance, but in areas not covered by BV indicators. However, there are other cases where performance was insufficiently focused and performance management weak.
- 2.3 Since 2008/09 the Best Value Performance Indicators have been replaced by the National Indicator set. These indicators are more outcome-focused and form the main measures of progress for the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement (LAA). These indicators raise different issues for the Council. The new indicators require a greater degree of partnership work and, because they are broader in nature, it is necessary to be clearer about what actions of the Council have a significant impact on the performance indicators.
- 2.4 The loss of the Best Value indicator set has also raised issues about which of those indicators are to be retained as local indicators; how the Council can compare its performance with other authorities; and whether alternative arrangements for benchmarking will be required.
- 2.5 From April 2009 the Comprehensive Area Assessment was introduced. The Area Assessment element will ask how well the Council and its partners are setting out priorities which meet local needs and delivering those priorities through LAA targets. The Organisational Assessment will include a specific assessment of the Council's performance improvement arrangements. The outcome of the first assessment is awaited.

### **Current Performance Related Initiatives and Projects**

- 2.6 The Council has adopted new Aims, Approaches and Actions for 2009/10 onwards. This framework, particularly the more specific Council Actions, give a sound basis for performance improvement. The Council has a portfolio holder with a performance improvement remit.
- 2.7 The Council has adopted four values: Customer Service; Trust; Mutual Respect; and a Commitment to Improve Services. The Council is currently in the process of embedding these values in the work of the Council. In response to the 2008 staff

survey, the Council is pursuing a range of initiatives to improve staff satisfaction and engagement. This work and the values will form an important element of the performance improvement strategy and culture proposed in this document.

- 2.8 The Council has acquired and is implementing a new software application, CorVu, to provide a single source of performance information and provide views of the data which meet the needs of all stakeholders involved in performance improvement. Work is also taking place with the County council and other partners in the LSP and Cambridgeshire Together to establish an effective partnership based approach to performance improvement.
- 2.9 The Council has developed its processes to set and manage performance targets. These include service planning and various reporting/monitoring arrangements. Over the last two years these have become more embedded in the work of the Council. The staff appraisal scheme has been replaced by PDRs (performance and development reviews) with a greater emphasis on staff skills and development. This strategy will build on these processes and set them in a clearer overall framework.
- 2.10 The Council has recently achieved Investors in People accreditation. This, and the new management competency framework, will provide further support for the development of good management practice to support performance improvement.
- 2.11 Other current corporate initiatives such as the commitment to achieve the Customer Service Excellence standard and reach the “Achieving” level of the national equalities framework will also have implications in driving up performance.
- 2.12 The Council has established the Performance Improvement Group with representatives from all services to promote performance management; share good practice; progress benchmarking; and advise services on performance issues.

### **Conclusions and Challenges**

- 2.13 Overall, the Council has a good, but inconsistent, record on performance management. Many building blocks are now in place or being put into place.
- 2.14 The transition to the national indicator set, with its emphasis on outcomes and partnership, creates challenges for the Council. It will be more important to be clear about the Council’s role in partnerships and what actions on the part of the Council can effectively contribute towards the achievement of shared aims.
- 2.15 There has been a tendency for performance indicators to become more numerous and for performance improvement effort to be insufficiently focused. This needs to be addressed, particularly given the resource situation facing the Council.
- 2.16 Many initiatives are currently being taken forward which will have the effect of improving performance. This strategy is an opportunity to provide a narrative which brings these initiatives together; to broaden the understanding of, and gain a wider commitment to, performance improvement among all Members and staff.
- 2.17 The new performance management application based on CorVu will potentially provide the Council, its partners and the public with up to date and relevant performance information to enable all concerned to play their respective roles in performance improvement. To achieve this the system needs to be fully integrated with Council systems, with a commitment across the Council to supply relevant high quality data input.

### 3. Where do we want to be?

#### What is Performance Improvement?

- 3.1 The most important thing about performance improvement is that it should encompass all the actions required to set and deliver achievable objectives which translate the Council's priorities into tangible improvements for service users and the public. In this strategy we generally use the expression "performance improvement", rather than "performance management" to emphasise that it is not just something for managers, but for all of us.
- 3.2 The following activities all contribute to the various phases of performance improvement –

**Planning** – understanding current performance, prioritising what needs to be done; identifying actions that need to be taken; and planning for improvement, e.g., through

- Setting political priorities
- Setting clear targets in strategies and policies
- Setting customer service standards
- Using evidence to evaluate performance, set aims and be satisfied that planned programmes of action are the right ones to deliver outcomes.
- Service planning
- Budget and workforce planning

**Performing:** Ensuring that the proper systems and processes are in place to support improvement, take action and manage risk – and helping people achieve better performance – e.g., through

- Staff performance and development reviews (PDRs)
- Training and development
- Management development/competency frameworks
- Sound project management skills and methodology
- Engagement of staff in performance improvement through team meetings, quality circles etc
- Risk management
- Collecting and using performance data
- Ensuring data is accurate
- Communicating successes
- Working with partners

**Reviewing:** Understanding the impact of your actions, reviewing performance, speaking to users and stakeholders about their experience of performance and getting a better picture of changing circumstances, e.g., through -

- Consultation / satisfaction surveys
- Engaging with customers
- Service reviews using appropriate review methodologies
- Performance reports and using the reports to correct performance
- Reviewing performance with portfolio holders, teams and staff.
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Scrutiny

**Revising:** Using the lessons learned from review to change your plans or what you do so that future action is more efficient, effective and appropriate. This includes a willingness to try new ways of service delivery.

- 3.3 In essence, performance improvement is having a commitment to improve services; being clear about what you want to improve; and using all means at your disposal to achieve those improvements.

#### **Requirements for Performance Improvement**

- 3.4 What does the Council need to have in place to achieve effective performance improvement?
- **Leadership, Ambition and Performance Improvement Culture.** To be effective any organisation needs to have clear aims and ambition. It needs to have a culture, values and leadership which empower and motivate staff to deliver improving services.
  - **Clarity of Roles.** All Members and employees need to have a clear understanding about their contribution to performance improvement.
  - **Effective and integrated systems.** All the relevant systems (performance systems; service planning; ICT; customer service; equalities; appraisals, training and development; risk management) need to be effective, aligned and embedded.
  - **Robust performance improvement arrangements in place with partners.** The Council needs to be involved with partners who have shared aims and a similar commitment to performance improvement. Council representatives on partnerships need to understand how performance improvement works in a partnership environment.
  - **A Track Record of achievement.** For performance improvement to be successful, the Council needs to have some successes on which to build and learn.
- 3.5 The remainder of this strategy addresses these essential requirements.

#### **Where do we want to be by 2012?**

- 3.6 **Improvement Vision.** The overall aim of this strategy is that by the end of the next three years the Council will be seen to be consistently delivering improvements in services and the quality of life enjoyed by residents, as reflected in the Corporate Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.
- 3.7 The achievement of this vision will bring the following benefits –
- (a) A sense of achievement, success and motivation at all levels within the organisation
  - (b) Improving satisfaction with Council services and improving Council reputation
  - (c) Improving scores in the CAA performance management assessment and other external accreditations.
  - (d) Improving value for money services.
- 3.8 The main improvements required to achieve this position will be –
- (a) The establishment of a performance management culture which builds on our Values; broadens understanding and involvement in performance improvement; and where all staff and Members are clear about what contribution they can make to improve performance.

- (b) A constructive, honest, positive and blame-free approach to performance improvement among all staff and members, with all staff being involved in improving their service at individual, team and service level, giving a greater sense of satisfaction, engagement and being valued.
  - (c) A Council where we celebrate achievement; share good practice; and work together to improve performance and where low performance is not seen as someone else's problem.
  - (d) The full utilisation of the computerised performance improvement system (CorVu) at all levels (Members, managers, team leaders and staff) as an essential tool in improving performance.
  - (e) The Council having a clear and achievable set of performance targets or actions each year which would make a meaningful contribution towards Cambridgeshire Together targets and delivering on those targets.
  - (f) Effective working relations with our partners; a common approach towards performance improvement; and a common system for collecting and recording performance data.
  - (g) All staff having an annual PDR and an agreed work programme and development programme. All managers being well on the way towards meeting the criteria for their post in the management competency framework.
  - (h) Integrated well-understood systems which play a part in improving performance – e.g., service planning, performance monitoring systems; project management; service reviews; and scrutiny.
- 3.9 Our progress can also be measured and motivated by success in achieving relevant external recognition and accreditation – for example: in relation to IIP status; the CAA performance management assessment; the Customer Service Excellence standard; and the national equalities framework.
- 3.10 The remainder of this strategy explores and sets out our approach to addressing the improvements given above so as to achieve our Improvement Vision.

#### **4. Performance Improvement Culture**

- 4.1 The adoption of Council Values and the staff involvement and engagement work being developed in response to the 2008 staff survey provide the framework for a performance management culture.
- 4.2 The most successful organisations are those where performance is not only led from the top, but where performance improvement is owned at all levels; where employees are fully engaged in contributing their ideas to improve performance; and where success is recognised and mistakes are seen as a learning opportunity.
- 4.3 The Council is unlikely to achieve the breakthrough it needs in performance if performance management is seen just as something for managers or purely as a device for target setting. It should not be linked to pay. It should be more flexible and more about learning, skills development and empowerment



- 4.4 All the Council's values have a bearing on how performance improvement can be pursued – for example –
- **Customer Service.** A focus on understanding and meeting the needs of customers is a key driver for performance improvement.
  - **Respect** plays a part in performance improvement by respecting, supporting and valuing the differing perspectives and contributions that other officers or Members are making to improve services. Most importantly, recognising and respecting the needs of service users.
  - **Trust** is an effective building block for performance improvement in that it enables individuals and teams to raise and be open about performance issues, trusting that they will be dealt with in a constructive, non-reproachful, manner. Trust empowers individuals and teams to address performance issues.
  - **A Commitment to Improving Services.** This value demonstrates that performance improvement is at the core of the Council's activities. It encapsulates a range of positive approaches to improvement – such as embracing new ways of working; removing barriers that prevent effective working; celebrating successes; learning from mistakes; and developing skills and learning.
- 4.5 The Council's approach to performance improvement will be based on these values and will also embrace staff engagement and involvement and the importance of all Members and officers working as a team.

**Our Approach to Performance Improvement:**

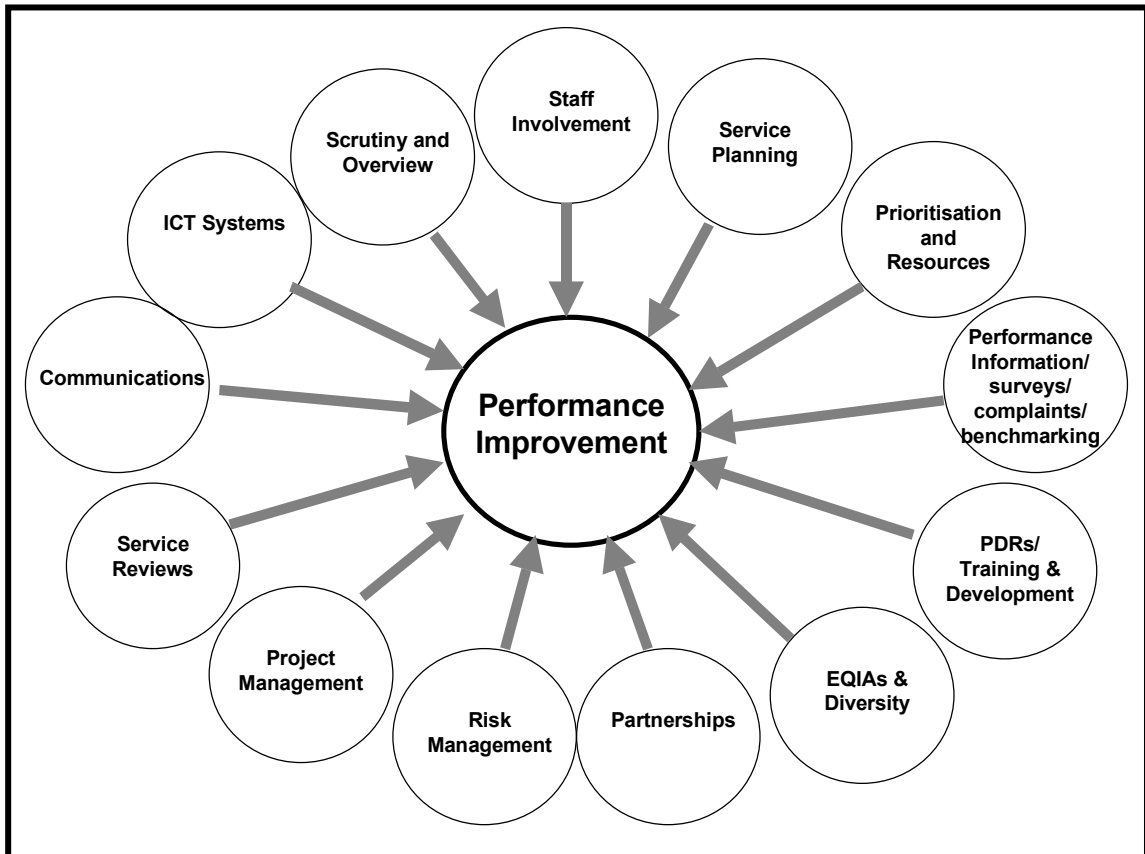
- Recognising that all employees and Members have a contribution to make
- Learning from our mistakes; not casting blame, but helping to put things right
- Working constructively together, focused on service improvement
- Developing skills and capacity to deliver improvement.
- Celebrating successes.

- 4.6 This strategy envisages this view of performance improvement culture being promoted through a range of approaches such as communications; the embedding of Council values; staff involvement; and the rewarding and celebrating of success. Actions are set out in more detail in the Action Plan at the end of the document.

## 5. Performance Improvement Systems

### Council Systems Supporting Performance Improvement

- 5.1 In order to deliver fully on the Council's commitment to service improvement, all relevant Council systems and processes need to be clearly focused on performance improvement. The diagram below demonstrates how extensively Council activities and systems relate to and can promote the improvement of services.



- 5.2 For effective performance improvement all these and other Council processes and resources need to be maximised and aligned to the aim of performance improvement and their role in performance improvement recognised. The Council's key systems are described below.
- 5.3 **Strategic Planning and Prioritisation.** The Council reviews its strategic priorities for service improvement each year in the period June to July in order to set a clear direction for the service planning process. This process is working well and the Cabinet has given a clear sense of direction. It is recommended that for 2010 onwards the process is strengthened by the development of a "State of the Nation" report in May setting out the issues facing the Council in the medium term which will inform the prioritisation process.
- 5.4 **Service Planning.** This is the Council's key mechanism for translating Council improvement priorities into clear plans for delivery at service level. The process works well and is continually developing.
- 5.5 **Financial Planning.** Financial resources reflect the Council's improvement priorities; the need to maintain statutory services; and the medium term financial pressures

facing the Council. The service plan process informs the budget preparation process. Further improvement could be made by reporting performance information with financial estimates so that decisions on service budgets take into account the performance levels and planned improvements for the service in question.

- 5.6 **Workforce Planning.** The Council carries out an annual strategic assessment of its workforce needs to achieve its priorities and service obligations. That annual assessment then feeds into the service plan process. Investors in People accreditation and a range of other HR initiatives (performance and development reviews; management competencies; training and development etc) all play an important part in performance improvement.
- 5.7 **ICT Systems.** Effective ICT is essential in providing the Council with the systems it needs to deliver and improve services to customers. The broad approach is set out in the ICT Strategy; the ICT Steering Group co-ordinates the implementation of the strategy; and the ITLog Group seek users' views. As a result of a recent service review, a programme of action is currently underway to improve the contribution that ICT makes to service improvement through better customer service; an improved dialog with service departments; and greater use of project management.
- 5.8 **Service Reviews.** The Council has a system and process for conducting reviews of services in order to assess current effectiveness and identify means of improving the service. Different methodologies have recently been used, and it is now important to establish a clearer purpose and methodology for Service Reviews, based around service improvement.
- 5.9 **Project Management.** The Council has a project management toolkit which is available on the intranet and is used for major projects. Setting clear objectives for projects and effectively delivering them through project management is a key deliverer for performance improvement. Further work is required to improve the use of project management methodology within the Council by the review of the existing toolkit; clear guidelines as to when project management methodology will be used; and training.
- 5.10 **Risk Management.** Risk management enables the Council to minimise and manage risks to service improvement and delivery. Effective processes are in place and are continuing to develop in order to identify, assess and manage risks at a Corporate and Service level.
- 5.11 **Scrutiny.** The Scrutiny and Overview Committee has a key role in identifying areas for service improvement and putting forward recommendations to deliver that improvement. This can be achieved through reviewing performance reports; taking up issues raised by the public or Members; or challenging the Executive. Scrutiny and Overview Committee to be invited to consider this strategy and its role in performance improvement.
- 5.12 **Performance Monitoring.** At present EMT and Cabinet review progress on the Corporate Plan and key indicators on a quarterly basis. Service teams and portfolio holders also review performance on a regular basis. However, the frequency, format and approach differ across the Council and generally the focus is on performance indicators and is not seen so holistically as a focus on all performance related issues. The Council's new computerised system (CorVu) provides the opportunity for performance review to be carried out by Members, managers, team leaders and staff outside of the meeting process and to be much more integrated with service delivery. It will also enable consistent data to be available for meetings and will enable the

focus to move more from the data itself to consideration of actions to improve performance.

- 5.13 A significant aspect of the development of CorVu will be that any Member will be able to view performance information at any time and to raise issues with the appropriate Member or officer. In order to avoid confusion, a protocol will be devised based on the principle that Members should raise performance issues first with the relevant portfolio holder and (if not satisfied) with Scrutiny and Overview Committee.
- 5.14 **Research and Intelligence.** Performance improvement requires information – in the form of: up to date performance information and performance trends; the views of service users; benchmarking information to compare performance; and best practice from other comparable organisations.
- 5.15 **Financial monitoring.** Monitoring of expenditure against budgets is undertaken by cost centre managers and senior management and portfolio holders on a regular basis. Quarterly integrated business monitoring reports are considered by EMT and Cabinet which bring together financial monitoring and performance data to provide a mechanism by which resources can be moved in order to maximise performance within the budgets available. This can also be achieved at service level through virements.
- 5.16 **Communications.** The Council has a range of communications streams in place, including South Cambs Magazine, the Chief Executive’s weekly email, Corporate Briefings, and SCene. These provide opportunities, which could be further exploited, to enhance performance improvement by celebrating successes and sharing learning.
- 5.17 **Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs).** Impact assessments are undertaken for all existing and new services and policies. EQIAs are an opportunity to improve services through the use of data collected and the identification of obstacles preventing all members of the community from enjoying equal access to and benefit from the Council’s services.
- 5.18 **Customer Service.** The Council gives high priority to the improvement of customer service and has established the Service First group and customer service standards. The standards and the use of customer feedback (through satisfaction surveys, other consultation and learning from complaints) are all key mechanisms of performance improvement. The Council is also committed to achieving Customer Service Excellence accreditation in 2010 – 11 which will be an opportunity to develop and broaden commitment to customer service and improvement.
- 5.19 The Council will continue to develop and maximise the effectiveness of the above processes in delivering performance improvement through the projects set out in the Action Plan.

**Annual Planning and Review Processes**

- 5.20 The following are the main annual processes relating to the planning and review aspects of performance improvement which will be adopted by the Council.

<i>Month/s</i>	<i>Review and Planning Activity</i>
May	“State of the Nation” report reviewing future policy/priority options. This will include: review of performance for the Council and LAA;

	results of Place Survey and satisfaction surveys; other national and local trends and statistics.
June	End of year performance review report to SMT/EMT and Cabinet.
May - July	Cabinet to review priorities and identify priority areas for performance improvement, based on the "State of the Nation" report.
May – July	Review of the Workforce Plan
September	Staff Service Planning away days.
September – November	Services and portfolio holders draft and approve service plans which review performance and set performance targets or service standards for Council and LAA indicators. Assess and put forward financial and staffing implications of targets. Staff consulted on draft service plan.
November - December	Consideration and prioritisation of financial implications of performance targets and inclusion (where approved) in MTFS
November-December	Review draft service plans for consistency and coverage of cross cutting issues.
February	Finalise service plans and targets in the light of the approved budget and draft Corporate Plan.
March – April	Carry out staff PDRs to review progress and agree work plans and personal development plans to achieve improvement.
April	Adopt and publish Corporate Plan.

### Monitoring Processes

5.21 The Council has a range of individual monitoring systems – for example:-

Twice Yearly	Strategic Risks
	Staff PDRs and mid year reviews
Quarterly	Integrated Business Monitoring reports (Finance and Performance) are received by EMT/SMT and Cabinet
	LAA performance is reviewed in partnership meetings, LSP and Cambridgeshire Together meetings
	Risks are reviewed at service/operational level
	Portfolio holders review finance and performance (or more frequently depending on how meetings fall)
Monthly	Customer service standards and complaints by Service First
	Teams review performance
	Financial monitoring by SMT and by budget holders
	Sickness absence and other key HR statistics by SMT
	ICT service indicators

5.22 There is a range of other aspects of performance, projects or policies which are monitored on a regular or irregular basis. CorVu will enable an increasing range of performance information to be monitored by individual officers and Members at any time. The Council will continue to bring these monitoring processes together through CorVu in order to achieve a more integrated and holistic approach to performance monitoring.

## 6. Performance Improvement through Partnership Working

- 6.1 The Council has long recognised the benefits of working in partnership to deliver improved services in relation to health, housing, leisure services, community safety and other service areas. The Sustainable Community Strategy, Cambridgeshire Together and the CAA now bring a clearer framework and greater expectations to performance improvement in a partnership context. The Council has adopted criteria for effective partnership working and has identified partnerships which are most beneficial for the Council to work with.
- 6.2 The Council is an active partner in Cambridgeshire Together and the LAA Performance Group and has adopted the joint Data Quality Strategy.
- 6.3 In order to maximise the performance benefit from partnerships and use resources most effectively, the Council will adopt the following approach to its partnership working. The Council will -
- (a) participate only in partnerships where there are effective performance management arrangements in place and where there is evidence that that action on the part of the Council would lead to service improvements or quality of life for the public.
  - (b) encourage partnerships to adopt robust performance management arrangements.
  - (c) adopt a challenging but constructive approach to partnerships meetings
  - (d) identify what the Council can contribute towards the aims of the partnership and to performance manage the delivery of that contribution.
- 6.4 With regard to the LSP and Cambridgeshire Together, the Council will continue to work with partners to identify what contribution each partner can make to shared targets (and in particular, to identify disaggregated targets for districts); to participate in the development of shared performance management arrangements; and integrate targets in the Council's performance management systems.

## 7. Performance Improvement Roles

- 7.1 Performance improvement depends on clear roles throughout the organisation. The following roles are endorsed by the Council in order to support the culture and systems set out elsewhere in this strategy.
- 7.2 **Leader and Cabinet.** The key role would be to set clear priorities for performance improvement; ensure that resources match the improvement aspirations; and lead by example in establishing a performance improvement culture in the organisation. More specifically -
- (a) Giving leadership to a performance improvement culture and to review this strategy on a regular basis.
  - (b) Setting clear priorities and targets for performance improvement
  - (c) Including challenging and realistic performance indicators and targets in the Corporate Plan to ensure progress on the Council's Aims.
  - (d) Through the MTFs and Workforce Plan ensuring that there is sufficient capacity within the organisation to achieve its performance objectives.
  - (e) Monitoring performance on a quarterly basis, through integrated business monitoring reports, initiating appropriate corrective action where end of year targets are not expected to be achieved.

- 7.3 **Portfolio Holders** give political leadership and accountability to ensure that the services for which they are responsible are improving in accordance with the Council's priorities. More specifically -
- (a) Taking ownership for the achievement of performance measures and service improvements relating to their portfolio using Corvu on a frequent basis to maintain an awareness of performance issues.
  - (b) Monitoring progress on performance at all portfolio holder meetings and agree actions with officers to correct any likely failures, reporting to Cabinet where it is unlikely that effective remedial action can be taken.
  - (c) Being involved and giving leadership to the service planning process.
  - (d) Responding constructively to performance issues raised by other Councillors.
- 7.4 **Scrutiny and Overview Committee.** The committee is well placed to play a leading role in performance improvement, by identifying areas where performance can be improved and putting forward constructive ways of taking this forward. More specifically -
- (a) Scrutinising draft service plans, the Corporate Plan and other documents and advise the Cabinet of targets which are unrealistic or insufficiently challenging in achieving the Council's objectives.
  - (b) Keeping the performance of the Council under review by various means (use of Corvu, portfolio holder meetings and scrutiny monitors, comments of the public, comparisons with other providers etc); investigating areas of concern; and making recommendations for improvement.
  - (c) Reviewing and evaluating this strategy.
- 7.5 **All Members.** All Members have a role in improving services for the public. This may include -
- (a) Maintaining an awareness of the performance of the Council through the use of Corvu; other reports; and the comments of the public.
  - (b) Raising performance issues with portfolio holders or Scrutiny and Overview Committee.
  - (c) Leading through example in adopting a constructive, positive and blame-free performance improvement culture.
- 7.6 **Senior/Executive Management Team Members.** Senior officers have a role in leading on performance improvement both in their own service area and in the Council as a whole – more specifically by -
- (a) Giving leadership at officer level to the performance improvement culture of the Council.
  - (b) Leading through example in adopting a constructive, positive and blame free performance improvement culture.
  - (c) Advising the Cabinet on strategic performance aims which measure the Council's progress on its priorities.
  - (d) Taking ownership for the achievement of performance measures and service improvements relating to their service area using CorVu on a frequent basis to maintain an awareness of performance issues
  - (e) Ensuring that CorVu is updated promptly; that PDRs are carried out; and that appropriate training in performance improvement is undertaken within all departments.
  - (f) Monitoring performance measures quarterly and reporting to Cabinet where measures are unlikely to be met, together with actions to address the situation.
  - (g) Implementing good management techniques that can engage and motivate staff in improving performance.

- (h) Taking the role of data quality champions to ensure that performance data supplied by their service area meets the Council's data quality standards.

7.7 **Managers and Team Leaders.** All managers can drive the improvement of their services by enhancing their own management skills and leading their teams in a way which embraces team engagement and performance improvement.

- (a) Being committed to the continuous improvement of their service and undertaking development in order to raise their skills to the level envisaged in the management competency framework.
- (b) Developing a realistic number of indicators which measure the progress of their service in achieving its main aims; the service it provides to customers; and its contribution to the Corporate Aims, Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA .
- (c) Involving staff in the development of performance measures to be included in service plans
- (d) Updating CorVu in accordance with the agreed frequencies and monitoring progress of measures for their service at appropriate intervals.
- (e) Undertaking PDRs for all staff, agreeing personal objectives which will contribute to the achievement of service targets.
- (f) Encouraging a positive team approach towards the setting and achievement of improvement aims and promoting the Council's performance improvement culture and values.
- (g) Celebrating successes and encouraging learning from other services.

7.8 **Members and Officers involved in Partnerships.** Partnerships are having an increasing role in performance improvement and the Council will gain the most benefit from partnerships if Council representatives –

- (a) Encourage external partnerships to apply an effective performance management approach to their activities.
- (b) Invest time and resources only in partnerships which lead to a positive outcome which contributes to the Council's performance targets.
- (c) Adopt a challenging but constructive approach to performance issues in partnership meetings.

7.9 **All employees.** All employees can contribute to performance improvement through engaging in improvement activities and drawing attention to performance issues in their work areas. More specifically by -

- (a) Adopting a commitment to manage and improve their personal performance in accordance with Council Values and the performance management culture.
- (b) Participating in service planning and the setting of performance measures for their service.
- (c) Agreeing to and working to personal objectives through their PDR to contribute towards the performance objectives for the service.
- (d) Advising their line manager promptly of issues affecting the achievement of team objectives

7.10 **The Performance Improvement Group.** The purpose of this group is to develop and implement this strategy - and in particular to -

- (a) To promote the Council's performance improvement culture throughout the organisation and broaden involvement in performance improvement
- (b) To identify Council wide performance trends and assess the performance management capacities of the Council and to make appropriate recommendations.



- (c) To act as a resource and sounding board for managers and team leaders to raise performance management problems or share experiences and successes
- (d) To set an example for the application of Council Values to performance management by addressing performance management issues in a blame-free, supportive and constructive manner.

7.11 These roles will be publicised through the publication and communication of this strategy and will be re-enforced through induction, through the implementation of annual processes, competency frameworks and training and development.

## **8. Risks**

8.1 The major risks to the delivery of this strategy relate to loss of momentum arising from competing priorities and the overall resource difficulties facing the Council. These risks will be minimised by taking a project management approach to the delivery of the Action Plan and by regular monitoring of progress by the Performance Improvement Group with reports to EMT.

## **9. Evaluation and Monitoring**

9.1 The overall success of this strategy will be assessed through progress with the delivery of the Action Plan, the Corporate Plan, other important National Indicators and other measures such as the staff survey and customer satisfaction. This assessment will first be carried out by the Performance Improvement Group in July 2010, with a report to EMT, with annual reviews thereafter.

9.2 The Action Plan will be implemented through project management methodology, with progress being monitored and managed by the Performance Group, again with reporting to EMT at least twice per annum.

## **10. Equalities Impact Assessment**

10.1 Section to be added following EQIA

## **11. Action Plan**

11.1 A detailed action plan is given in the Appendix.

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## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The plan is structured around the requirements for effective performance management identified in Section 3 of the Strategy

#	Action	Who	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	<b>Project Set Up</b>				
1	Set up project and allocate responsibilities	PIG	Nov		
2	Progress reports to PIG and EMT	P&P team	Jan	✓	
3	Major review in July 2010 then annually	PIG		July	✓
	<b>Leadership, Ambition and Performance Improvement Culture</b>				
4	Scrutiny and Overview Committee to be invited to consider the strategy and its role in performance improvement.	P&P team	Oct		
5	Adoption of this strategy and endorsement of the Performance Improvement culture in Section 3 by SMT and Cabinet.	Chief Executive	Nov		
6	The publication of this strategy with key messages to all Members and staff.	P&P team	Nov		
7	Communicate performance improvement issues, particularly focusing on successes, in the Corporate Briefing; Chief Executive's weekly emails and other internal communications – in a way which re-enforces the performance management culture	P&P team Comms team	✓	✓	✓
8	Base the Council's improvement plans more closely around a smaller number of Council Actions and LAA targets where the Council can make a significant difference.	P&P team	Dec	✓	✓
9	The continuing work of the Performance Improvement Group – to review at least one performance issue for each service once a year.	PIG	✓	✓	✓
10	The continuing implementation of the values project and the staff engagement and involvement programme	Values project Staff engagement steering group	✓		
11	Extending the involvement of staff in the service plan process beyond the current initial away days.	Corporate Managers	✓	✓	✓
12	All services to embed the values and approach to performance management in the service plan process	Corporate Managers	✓		

#	Action	Who	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
13	Establish performance noticeboards etc within service areas to develop ownership of performance.	P&P team	✓		
14	Establish regular awards to recognise good performance	P&P team	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Clarity of Roles</b>				
15	Invite Cabinet, Scrutiny and Overview, EMT to sign up to the roles in the strategy.	P&P team	✓		
16	Communicate the roles in this report to all Members and staff	P&P team	✓		
17	Include the roles in induction for officers and Members	HR/Dem Services	✓	✓	✓
18	Take roles into account in next review of Management Competency Framework	HR		✓	
19	Take account of roles in job descriptions and PDRs	HR		✓	
	<b>Effective and systems to support performance improvement</b>				
20	Prepare "State of the Nation" report to provide evidence base for Council priorities	P&P Team		May	
21	Include performance information with draft estimates reports.	Exec Dir - Finance		✓	
22	Continue to focus the Workforce Plan on providing the means to deliver improvement.	HR Manager/ P&P team		✓	✓
23	Continue to improve the quality and coverage of performance & development reviews (staff appraisals) with a focus on performance improvement.	HR team P&P team		✓	✓
24	Complete the implementation of the ICT service review to maximise the support given by ICT to performance improvement.	Exec Director/ HR Manager		✓	
25	Clarify the future methodology for service reviews and agree the future programme of reviews	P&P team			
26	Actions to improve the quality and timeliness of data input into CorVu and developing the reports available and the use of the system	P&P team	✓	✓	✓
27	Actions to identify and implement opportunities for direct input of performance data from existing systems into CorVu.	ICT team P&P team		✓	
28	Develop regular, structured, and integrated performance monitoring at all levels (Cabinet, portfolio holder, scrutiny, EMT, service and team levels) using the computerised performance management system (CorVu)	P&P team	✓	✓	✓

#	Action	Who	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
29	Prepare, consult on and publish guidance to Members on raising performance issues.	P&P team		✓	
30	Use the results of EQIAs to improve services and gain data on the use of services.	P&P team Corporate Managers	✓	✓	✓
31	Improve use of customer feedback and other consultation results to improve services, as part of Customer Service Excellence work	P&P team	✓	✓	✓
32	Develop use of external information (benchmarking and best practice) to improve performance	P&P team		✓	✓
	<b>Robust performance improvement arrangements in place with partners</b>				
33	Continue to work with Cambridgeshire Together partners to establish effective shared performance management arrangements for the LAA, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved integration between the County and district CorVu applications</li> <li>Agreement of disaggregated targets for districts</li> </ul>	Partnerships team P&P team	✓	✓	✓
34	Ensure that all relevant LAA targets (or proxy indicators) are included in relevant service plans and are subject to regular performance review	P&P team	✓		
35	Assess performance management arrangements of major partnerships the Council is involved in.	Partnerships team		✓	✓
36	Training and development in performance management in partnerships	HR team/ Partnership team		✓	
	<b>Achieve Level 3 of CAA performance management assessment</b>				
37	In the light of the 2009 assessment outcome, draw up an action plan to achieve or consolidate level 3 and revise this plan accordingly.	PIG	✓		

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## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny and Overview Committee  
**AUTHOR/S:** Scrutiny Development Officer

1 October 2009

### SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

#### Purpose

- 1 To update the committee on progress made on past and ongoing scrutiny work.
- 2 To enable the committee to plan its work programme for the coming months.

#### Options

- 3 The Committee may agree the work programme at Appendix A, subject to changes agreed at this meeting.

#### Existing Task and Finish Groups

- 4 The Committee is in the process of setting up a task & finish group to review young people's services and a verbal update on progress will be made at the meeting.
- 5 The Finance task & finish group is continuing to monitor progress on the recommendations made in its interim report. The group intends to reconvene as soon as the new executive director and S151 officer is available to support the second tranche of work. This is likely to be after he has presented his second report on value for money, in December.

#### Progress on past recommendations and decisions

- 6 There were no formal recommendations or decisions at the last meeting. However, at the previous meeting members suggested to the Finance portfolio holder:
  - *the Federation of Small Businesses should be approached to see if they could assist in creating a business forum*
 An update may be requested from the Economic Development Officer at this meeting.

#### Planning the 2009/10 work programme

- 7 The current work programme is at Appendix A.
- 8 The Council's Forward Plan for September 2009 will also be available at the meeting.
- 9 In choosing topics for the work programme, Members are reminded of the agreed selection criteria as shown at Appendix B. Members will also wish to consider any impact on the Sustainable Community Strategy's priorities and targets as at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/774C1C91-75A0-4D6C-8B5D-419380255C7D/0/ReworkedLAA\\_text2withcover.pdf](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/774C1C91-75A0-4D6C-8B5D-419380255C7D/0/ReworkedLAA_text2withcover.pdf)

#### 10 Implications

Financial	None
Legal	The Constitution states that the Committee will set its own work programme

Staffing/ capacity	The committee is supported by one scrutiny officer. Each item selected for scrutiny would require support by at least one lead officer. Capacity for scrutiny work is also dependent on the number of elected members available and willing to participate
Risk Management	The potential burden on the organisation of supporting scrutiny work must be balanced against the potential value it could add. External scrutiny carries the risk of affecting the Council's relationship or credibility with partners
Equal Opportunities	None

**Consultation**

- 11 Cabinet, elected members, senior officers and residents have been invited to suggest potential topics. Parish councils continue to be consulted during the year, especially when the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meets in their locality.
- 12 Consultation with nearby councils, including the county council, took place at the county-wide scrutiny conference in September 2009. Ongoing consultation, for example to explore joint scrutiny activities, can be undertaken via the county scrutiny network.

**Effect on Corporate Objectives**

- 13 The Committee's selection criteria ensure that any topic selected for scrutiny will contribute to at least one of the Council's priorities.

**Recommendations**

- 14 That this report be used as a basis for agreeing a work programme for 2009/10.

Contact Officer: Jackie Sayers, Scrutiny Development Officer Tel: (01954) 713451



## Draft Work Programme 2009/10

	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Venue</b>
5 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit Orchard Park Action Plan</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy refresh</li> <li>• Revisit Complaints process</li> <li>• New Communities portfolio holder presentation</li> </ul>	New Communities Finance Customer Service New Communities	Orchard Park
3 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth participation Strategy</li> <li>• Planning and setting the budget</li> <li>• Value for Money (2 of 2)</li> <li>• Environmental Services portfolio holder presentation</li> </ul>	New Communities Finance Sustainability, Procurement, Efficiency Env Services	Haslingfield - Wisbey's Yard Sheltered Housing
7 Jan 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader's presentation</li> </ul>	Leader	Great Shelford Memorial Hall
4 Feb preceded by self- evaluation session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Re-visit Call for Action process</li> <li>• Re-evaluate off-site meetings/public participation</li> <li>• Policy Development, Improvement and Communications and ICT portfolio holder</li> </ul>	Finance  Policy Dev, Improvement and Comms and ICT	Cambourne
4 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice Based Lettings</li> <li>• Draft Annual scrutiny report</li> <li>• Housing portfolio holder presentation</li> </ul>	Housing  Housing	Linton Village College
1 April			Foxton

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## PAPER Analysis



When considering whether to adopt an item onto its agenda programme, the Committee will score the item using the following criteria:

1. **Public Interest:** the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny  
(1= low public interest, 2=medium public interest, 3=high public interest)
2. **Ability to change:** priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence  
(1= little chance of changing, 2=reasonable chance, 3=good chance)
3. **Performance:** priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well.  
(1= good performance, 2=moderate performance, 3=low performance)
4. **Extent:** priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the District.  
(1= only one ward, 2= multi-ward issue, 3=the entire District)
5. **Replication:** work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.  
(1= already well covered, 2=already partly covered, 3=not already covered)

Also of major importance is the extent to which any potential scrutiny issue has implications for the Council's priorities, as well as the overall vision:

“To make South Cambridgeshire a safe and healthy place where residents are proud to live and where there will be opportunities for employment, enterprise and world-leading innovation. We will be a listening Council, providing a voice for rural life and first-class services accessible to all.”

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