

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR: Chief Executive

9 February 2006

9 MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT – APRIL 2005 to DECEMBER 2005 MILESTONES FOR 2005/06

Purpose

1. The report provides Cabinet with a final opportunity to review progress as at the end of December 2005 and where possible initiate action to address significant slippage.

2.	Quality, Accessible, Value for Money Services	Achieving agreed milestones on time would ensure the Council achieves its objectives and priorities.
	Village Life	
	Sustainability	
	Partnership	

General

3. The end-of-year performance picture is now quite clear and there is limited time to address any problems. However it is important to demonstrate that progress is being monitored, as this is a key element of our overall performance management framework.
4. The Council set 105 milestones for 2005/06 and 88 (84%) have been achieved or are expected to be achieved on time. This compares very favourably with the 6-month report where the corresponding figures were 72 (69%).
5. This report focuses on the 17 milestones where progress has been delayed, is unlikely to be achieved; or are otherwise a matter of concern. These 17 are included in the tables in **Appendix 1**, which also includes the milestones that have been achieved since the 6-month report.
6. The rest of this report highlights the key issues for Portfolio Holders to consider.

Progress by Priority

7. A summary of performance under each priority is given below.

Priority 1 – To Improve Customer Service

8. Excellent overall progress is being maintained in all areas (Contact Centre development; ESD; and development of customer service standards).
9. Some delays continue to be experienced with 2 Electronic Service Delivery milestones: -

M11 (Arrangements to maximise the services covered by the Contact Centre and to improve working between the Contact Centre and back office).

10. Delays are due the County Council programme to introduce BizTalk and MultiVue. We are exercising as much influence as possible but are not in full control of the situation.

M16 (the ability to carry out land charge searches on line).

11. A partial on-line facility will be in place and NLIS Level 2 is in operation. A paper is being developed which will recommend the way forward and revised timescales.

Priority 2 – To achieve successful, sustainable new communities at Northstowe and other major new settlements

12. The Council is on course and despite significant work pressures in the Planning Policy Team the draft LDF was approved on time.

Priority 3 – To increase the supply of affordable housing

13. There continues to be significant challenges and delays in relation to partnership schemes (e.g. Cambourne Phase II). This is resulting in significant slippage to the planned timescales in almost all milestones. Most factors are outside the control of the authority (e.g. need to work at a sub-regional level) and the following milestones have been adversely affected: -

M56 (Review of partnership arrangements for affordable housing)

M57 (Review of partnership working at Cambourne and Cambridge Northern Fringe)

M63 (Northstowe: Review on an annual basis the ratio of intermediate and social rented housing)

M58 (Review of funding options for Cambourne)

M52 (Annual assessments of feedback from tenants/residents of new housing schemes)

14. Delays to the following milestones are as a direct result of the savings due to capping, which resulted in a temporary post, to carry out the work, not being filled: -

M53 (Appraisal of Council land and property to identify opportunities for affordable housing)

M54 (Agree a programme to develop the opportunities identified in M53)

15. A report will go to Cabinet in February 2006 with an alternative funding option for M53. If agreed the work could be completed by Jan 2007.

Arising from CPA – Prioritisation, Performance Management and Future Plans

16. These milestones relate to the actions to which the authority agreed in the CPA Improvement Plan. They were designed to improve the ability of the Council to set priorities and clear targets; to manage performance to achieve those targets; and to be clearer about the future direction of the Council. These areas are a key responsibility for the Cabinet.

17. The cuts which have been made following capping have made it even more important to make the best use of the remaining resources. There is a need to focus on those things that will make the biggest difference to local people and to manage staff and

resources to ensure those benefits are delivered. Effective prioritisation and performance management will be essential to deliver this.

18. It is important for the Council to recover from the capping exercise and focus on the process of planning and improving services as quickly as possible. Milestones that are most affected are: -

M69 Agree an annual process for prioritisation and resource planning, including the roles of all Members and officers, to give greater certainty about annual processes.

19. The overdue report from the Audit Commission on their inspection of our Prioritisation and Performance processes has now been received, which will enable us to build appropriate recommendations into the 2007/08-budget process.

M71 (Review all PIs with services to ensure that they are being collected in accordance with definitions; that appropriate collection processes are in place; and that they measure service and Council priorities)

20. It is hoped to include this work when discussing the 2006/07 service plans with managers and it is possible that it could be completed in Q1 2006.

M75 (Review and re-launch the Performance Management Framework and provide performance management training for Members and managers)

21. The recently received audit commission report will now help this work to move forward. Appropriate actions will be included in the 2006/07 Policy & Performance service plan, which will take into account the possible updating or replacement of PIMMS.

M81 (Include Community Strategy aims and targets, in the corporate monitoring system)

22. Now that the LPSA has been agreed there is a clear link to the Community Strategy aims. Thus progress has been made but the issue will continue into 2006/07 and will need to build in the implications of the LAA.

Waste and Recycling Scheme

23. Both milestones have slipped, which is largely due to staff resources not being available to carry out the work. However a great deal has been achieved.

M87 Develop a cleaner streets strategy

24. The strategy is developing and much work to implement sections likely to be in it are in train or have been completed i.e. LA/EA fly-tipping protocol agreed, secondment of County Officer, enforcement officer in post, PCSO empowerment, enviro-crime group, CDRP engagement, implementation on new powers, LPSA signed. A great deal has been achieved with limited resources for which officers should be complimented.

M88 Evaluate the new integrated Waste and Recycling scheme

25. Some parts of the work have been delayed but the work is still moving forward. The research work has been completed and will be considered by the Officer

implementation group before being presented to the WMAG in March 2006. The evaluation has not brought to light any major issues for review and alteration.

Milestones on major issues facing the council in 2005/06

26. Progress has now been made in most areas. Following a meeting of the Corporate Efficiency Savings Working Group in December 2005, earlier concerns about our ability to achieve Gershon efficiency savings have now eased. Two milestones are still under pressure as follows:

M96 Inspections and Audit - Draw up a plan to implement the recommendations from the inspection of Prioritisation and Performance Management.

27. The Audit Commission report has now been received. Our ability to implement the recommendations will be affected by the Council's reduced capacity but that process begin.

M101 Travellers – Consider and draw up proposals to respond to the Travellers Housing Needs (THN) survey.

28. We must now wait for the Government guidance. The timetable is unlikely to be achieved but all that can be done and that is within our control will be done as speedily as possible.

Summary and Conclusions

29. We will not achieve all the 2005/06 milestones but the overall picture of achievement is very gratifying. The two main reasons for slippage are the cuts due to capping and the need to work in partnership at a sub-regional level, where we are not in full control of events.
30. Attention should be directed to the following areas, which are most critical to the Council's progress on its priorities and the transformation project: -
- a) Complete Contact Centre Phase 2; maximising the use of the contact centre; and identifying scope for efficiency gains through the use of the contact centre.
 - b) Ensure that progress is maintained in the programme to achieve electronic service delivery
 - c) Ensure that progress is maintained in the planning for Northstowe.
 - d) Ensure that pressure to maximise the level of affordable housing is maintained.
 - e) Ensure that there is agreement on an annual process for prioritisation and resource planning.
31. There is a great deal to be proud of in that officers, despite extreme pressures and loss of capacity, have continued to achieve what has been asked of them.

Recommendations

32. Cabinet is recommended to
- a) Confirm the importance of achieving milestones in relation to the areas identified in paragraph 30.
 - b) Request the Chief Executive to provide each portfolio holder with a list of their milestones which may not be achieved in 2005/06 and arrange for consideration of these milestones at each portfolio holder meeting.
 - c) Recognise publicly the significant successes of officers, in achieving the majority of corporate milestones, during what has been a traumatic year for everybody.

Background Papers:

The 2005 Performance Plan.

Contact Officer: Ian Salter – Performance Improvement Officer (01954 – 713018)