PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

2009 – 2012

Version 6 – October 2009

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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.
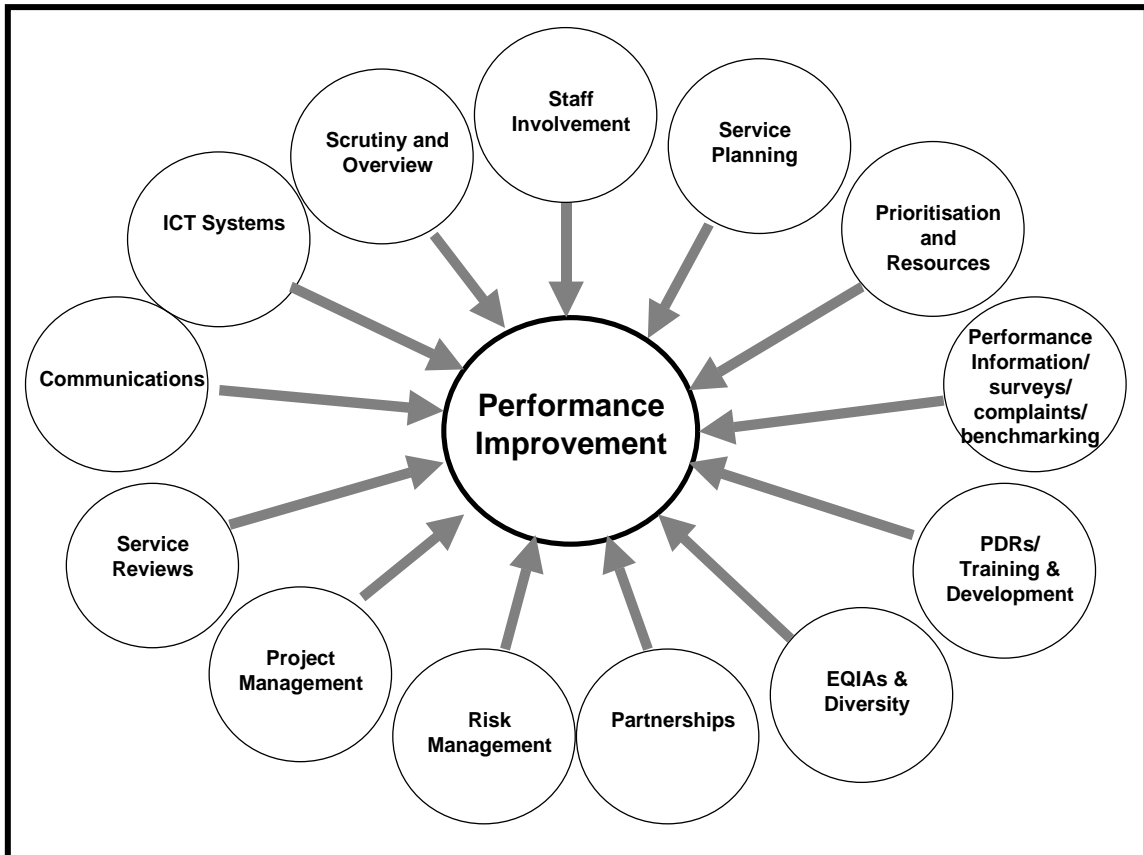
5.2   For effective performance improvement all these and other Council processes and resources need to be maximised and aligned to the aim of performance improvement and their role in performance improvement recognised. The Council's key systems are described below.

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.

Month/s	Review and Planning Activity
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.