

Appendix A:

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee Qtr 3

Local Performance Plan

This appendix provides an update on progress to the end of the third quarter against the targets in the Local Performance Plan for the Directorates relevant to this committee. Progress with items identified as shortfalls from last year are also updated.

The information is organised by Directorate, with updates for each quarter under the target, starting with the most recent quarter. From the second quarter, the status of targets has been identified using the following key:

Achieved: Target has been delivered successfully

On target: Confident of delivery of the target as worded by the end of the year or earlier if indicated in the target wording.

On target with risks identified: Majority of item on target for delivery, delays possible with some items (to be detailed in text)

Slippage possible: There are concerns about ability to deliver within the year - consequences and remedial actions to be described

Will not meet target: Reasons, consequences and any actions needed to be described

You will note that the format has changed to enable us to publish this report on the website, by changing the format away from tables this information is now DDA compatible.

Communications and Organisational Development - Local Performance Plan update - 2006/07

Target 1 - Demonstrate that we offer value for money for our services and a return on our investments in new technology and staff training by improving our efficiency and performance

Quarter 3 Progress - On Target

Public use of web services continues to grow strongly. Website visits are 24% higher than Q3 05/06, website pages served are 77% higher, and use of planning web services is 8% higher.

Our approach of increasing reliability, standardising platforms, simplifying technology and training staff to make better use of their ICT services has yielded a 13% drop in the number of IT Helpdesk calls opened.

Take up of the automated telephone confirmation system for the elections canvass was 27.45%, the highest take-up rate to date.

Our telephony project is on target to deliver savings of £82,000 this year, exceeding our target of £75,000, and an additional £30,000 next year.

Quarter 2 progress - On Target

Public use of web services continues to grow strongly. Website visits are 30% higher than Q2 05/06, website pages served are 99% higher.

Our approach of increasing reliability, standardising platforms, simplifying technology and training staff to make better use of their ICT services has yielded a 21% drop in the number of IT Helpdesk calls opened. Our telephony project remains on target to deliver planned financial savings of £75,000 this year, and an additional £30,000 next year. The introduction of the Managers' Kiosk for staff records, including absence and leave management, is reducing administrative paperwork between departments and Personnel.

In a new unexpected audit on Data Quality, the Audit Commission assessed the Council as good with 3 out of 4 points and no formal recommendations for improvement.

Qtr 1 Progress

Public use of web services continues to grow strongly. Website visits are 37.20% higher than Q1 05/06, website pages served are 104.56% higher, and use of planning web services is 11.44% higher.

Our approach of increasing reliability, standardising platforms, simplifying technology and training staff has yielded a 26.33% drop in the number of helpdesk calls opened. Our telephony project is on target to deliver planned financial savings of £75,000 this year.

Audit Commission Value For Money rating was 3 out of 4.

Target 2 - Continue to build on actions from our CPA Improvement Plan to-strengthen our organisational capacity and skills, including staff reward and recognition initiatives and management training programmes. Implement the outcomes of our review of family-friendly employment best practice.

Quarter 3 - On Target

External review completed. Further work being undertaken to ensure that the management development programme is structured to meet the needs of managers at different stages of their development. Action plan being developed. General managers have completed a development workshop including undertaking a 360 degree appraisal. The family friendly employment best practices have been implemented and addressed within the Council's policies and procedures..

Quarter 2

External review of management development programme underway with results expected in next quarter. We are using questionnaires and workshops to determine the effectiveness and impact of the training programme.

Planning sessions are being held by Personnel and IT for departments interested in exploring home working options.

Quarter 1 Progress

Corporate Training Programme in place to strengthen Organisational capacity and skills and management training programmes.

A draft Workforce Development Plan has been produced to implement both the reward and recognition initiatives and the outcomes of our review of family friendly employment best practice

Target 3 - Continue our work towards achieving level 3 of the Government's Equalities Standard by 2008, by reviewing all services and key policies in accordance with the Race Relations Act and Equalities Standard.

Quarter 3 – On target

Work ongoing within Directorates to address tasks identified in equalities action plans. Equalities Steering Group will review all progress against the plans in Q.4

Quarter 2 - On Target

The remit of the Equalities Steering Group (ESG) has been reviewed and clarified. Each directorate now has an Equalities Action Plan. The Disability Working Party will report to the ESG on the implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme.

The Equalities Officer has produced guidance and checklists for reviewing progress towards level 3 of the Equalities Standard. The ESG will report on corporate progress twice-yearly.

Quarter 1

The requirements of the Equality Standard have been mainstreamed into Corporate activity to achieve level 3.

Target 4 - Publish a Disability Equality Scheme by December 2006.

Quarter 3 - Achieved

Target completed – Disability Equalities scheme has been published.

Quarter 2 – On target

Disability Equality Scheme was sent to November Cabinet. Action Plan has been drafted for November consultation period prior to publishing in December.

Quarter 1

Draft Disability Equality Scheme produced which complies with all requirements of the Disability Equality Duty.

Target 5 - Review our Pay structure to ensure we can recruit to posts where there are national shortages of skilled people and provide opportunities in accordance with equal pay guidelines to address the gender pay gap.

Quarter 3 – on target with risks identified

Benchmarking results implemented. To ensure we are able to recruit and retain staff for hard to recruit professional posts, market supplements will remain in the immediate future.

Quarter 2 - On target with risks identified

Results of the benchmarking exercise will be implemented from 1st October. This exercise has realigned a number of posts and was undertaken as part of our response to the equal pay audit. Implementation of the full market pay adjustment for senior grades will not be possible under current budgets. Further investigation will be necessary to decide how best to respond to market pay demands.

Quarter 1

Benchmarking exercise completed. Draft report produced on pay analysis. Investigation into pay levels and structure ongoing

Target 6 - Encourage staff development e.g. by providing opportunities for all parking staff to achieve NVQ qualifications.

Quarter 3 - On target

Several employee's now qualified as NVQ assessors which will enable us to train and accredit NVQ's for Parking Service staff.

9 Corporate training events were held during the period, with 58 people taking part. A further 47 IT training events took place with 142 people attending. In addition, a training plan was developed for the Housing Options team on Anite, and a number of people had 1-1 training on Agresso. A driver training programme has been set up for drivers of liveried vehicles.

Quarter 2 - On target

360 degree appraisals and personal development workshops have been held for General Managers.

Quarter 1

All parking attendants have completed, are working towards or are registered to achieve NVQ qualifications.

Target 7 - Refurbish the Christchurch building in London Road, to create Central St. Leonards Offices for Council staff.

Quarter 3 – on target

The Christchurch refurbishment project is scheduled to complete at the end of February. Everything is on time and on budget and the Housing Department is expected to begin occupancy in April.

Quarter 2 - On target

The Christchurch project is on target to be completed, within budget, in February 2007. Staff relocation is scheduled to begin April 1st 2007.

Quarter 1

Internal computer network designed and cabling contract placed. Fibre optic link to Aquila House ordered.

Target 8 - Continue work to strengthen our links with those sections of the community who are underrepresented in our workforce in order to explore employment and training opportunities.

Quarter 3 – on target

Newly formed disability equalities working group will report to the equalities steering group on a bi-monthly basis. The gender equality

action plan to be agreed and published by 30/4/07. A representative from the Council's gender working party will act as liaison with the relevant external groups.

Quarter 2 On target

A representative from the Disability Forum now attends the Council's Disability Working Party and a representative from POD (Personnel & Organisational Development), now attends the Disability Forum. The working party will examine HBC's treatment of disabled staff and its success at attracting disabled applicants to meet commitments in the action plan from our Disability Equality Scheme

Quarter 1

A Recruitment Outreach Programme targeting underrepresented communities in our workforce is being piloted in schools and colleges.

Target 9 - Improve our online services to residents and visitors by enabling attractions, events and visitor accommodation to be booked online.

Quarter 3 - On target with risks identified

Bookings continue to be made on-line and we have met with 'Visit' management at their Winchester HQ to resolve technical problems, and are continuing to work with them; trade confidence is now increasing, at last, and we genuinely hope to see significant improvements in the number of on-line bookings made over the coming months.

Quarter 2 - On target with risks identified

Bookings are still being made on the bookings system but some technical difficulties are still being encountered
Success – the 'Visit' system is in operational and we are working hard with the service providers to iron out the technical glitches before we add events and attractions to the system.

Quarter 1

On line Destination Management System booking facility for accommodation now live and working – bookings are being made!
Events and attractions being pursued. Success – the 'visit' system has taken many months to introduce, the fact that live bookings are now being made is a real success – and testament to a lot of hard work. We now need to build confidence in the system.

Target 10 - Continue to develop targeted marketing campaigns aimed at improving the quality, and value, of tourism in the area.

Quarter 3 - On target

Our Content Management system is now being used to good effect, for example to promote Hastings week during this period.

Our joint work with Normandy continues to bear fruit; the replica Bayeux Tapestry visited the Town Hall in October, attracting well over 1000 visitors. We shared a promotional stand with Normandy at the Battle re-enactment in October, which attracted visitors from around the world. Because of our close links with English Heritage, this exhibition space was secured at a very fair price.

Our new Holiday Guide was published on time, and within budget, in December; it was again designed entirely in-house. It is clearly aimed at our target visitors, and has already received very positive feedback.

Quarter 2 - On target

We are now using the content management system on our 1066 Country website to promote new offers we are also building a database of people who want to receive such offers.

We successfully exhibited Hastings & 1066 Country at a Medieval Fayre in Bayeux. We were not charged for our stand space because of our developing partnership working with Bayeux and Calvados in Normandy.

Our partnership deal with Eurotunnel meant that Hastings & 1066 Country posters were exhibited free of charge in July

Our marketing of our Seafood and Wine Festival in September was also successful with over 10,000 visitors to the event. Our partnership working with South Eastern trains meant that posters advertising this event were displayed free of charge at railway stations throughout Kent and between Hastings and London.

Quarter 1

We are continuing to develop e-marketing offers, and have successfully introduced a new 1066 Country website, with a 'Content Management System'. This allows us to make real time changes to the website; we will shortly be introducing special offers with this facility.

Exhibition work has continued during this quarter, with 'Ostende voor Anker' proving particularly successful, as always.

Our partnership deal with Eurotunnel meant that 'Hastings and 1066 Country' posters were exhibited free of charge through Eurotunnel trains from June (and July – this space would have cost £16,000 to buy).

The Eurotunnel deal is a particular success and, through our targeted marketing, we are continuing to reach the higher spending potential visitors.

Target 11 - Continue to improve and expand the service offered through the Hastings Information Centre by expanding the range of parking

permits sold, enabling electoral registration and Council tax queries to be handled and offering an improved range of merchandise for sale.

Quarter 3 - On target

The new '24/7' kiosk outside the HIC is attracting over 1000 users a month, and is proving very popular. (Kiosks installed at Aquila House and Century House. These are partnership units funded by HBC and ESCC, and allow full access to a range of public and private sector websites and their associated electronic service offerings. The units also offer mobile phone top-ups and photo printing). Visitor numbers to the Information Centres continued to exceed our most optimistic forecasts, with 71 727 visitors during Q3. We have now recorded over 289 000 visitors to the Information Centres during the first three quarters of the year, almost achieving our full year target! Work is now progressing on developing on-line retailing, starting with around 12 key items to sell.

Quarter 2 - On target

New web kiosks installed at the HIC and Old Town TIC. These are partnership units funded by HBC and ESCC, and allow full access to a range of public and private sector websites and their associated electronic service offerings. The units also offer mobile phone top-ups and photo printing. Publicity will follow.

An external web kiosk was installed outside the Town Hall to prove 24x7 access to a range of electronic services.

The HIC had, as expected, its busiest quarter of the year, recording just under 125,000 visitors. Continuing this massive success we believe this to be the busiest quarter ever for the HIC and our footfall for the first six months of the year means we have now achieved over 70% of the full year target.

Quarter 1

The HIC successfully handled electoral registration queries for the first time this quarter, effectively piloting an element of the CRM system. The county wide bus pass scheme went 'live' during this quarter, marking one of the most intensive periods ever for the HIC staff:- some 8000 passes were renewed, and 3500 new passes issued during the three months.

The HIC successfully handled all advance sales for the Hastings Beer & Music Festival, including the 'Status Quo' concert which was entirely pre-sold. Massive success – this has been probably the busiest period ever for the HIC, with the additional electoral register work, bus pass schemes, and beer festival all coinciding. A total of 92800 customers used the HIC during this quarter, and the staff are to be congratulated for their hard work.

Target 12 - Improve the internal and external communication service offered through the adoption of a focused Marketing Communications Strategy.

Quarter 3 - On Target

The Marketing & Communications Strategy is now being worked to. A small number of PR stories have continued to dominate workload. During this period 46 out of 55 (84%) News Releases were taken by the Observer, still well above our 80% target. We were heavily involved in the Central St Leonards Consultation exhibition at the end of October. We continue to regularly meet with the Observer Editor and other reporters, and our regular Arrow FM slot continues (the latter now at an earlier time due to scheduling changes).

The weekly internal newsletter, " @bit" and the HBC News Update items, circulated to staff and members immediately after key meetings (Planning Committee, Cabinet, Full Council etc) continue to be issued, and are well received by staff.

Quarter 2 - On target

The Pier has continued to dominate workload for this quarter – we now believe we have spent more time on this story than any other single pr issue bar none. During the period 51 news releases were issued of which 41 (90%) were carried by the Hastings Observer. An increasing number of our stories have also been taken by the Argus. We continue regularly meet with the Observer Editor and other reporters, and our regular Arrow FM slot continues

Quarter 1

A draft Communications Strategy has been produced, and is being worked to. During the period 41 News Releases were issued, of which 37 (91%) were carried by the Hastings Observer. We regularly meet with the Observer Editor and other reporters, and our regular Arrow FM slot continues. Communications / PR is never straightforward, but our good relationship with the media has given us fair, balanced coverage, on potentially difficult issues.

Target 13 - Obtain a licence for the Town Hall to allow marriages and civil partnership ceremonies to take place.

Quarter 3 - On target

The licence has been granted, and provisional bookings for weddings have now been made! We are preparing marketing material jointly with the Museum, this will be published shortly.

Quarter 2 - On target

The licence application was submitted in July. The paperwork has been completed and inspections are awaited from East Sussex Fire Rescue Service and the Registrar –this is expected by the end of November. An advert will then be placed. If no objections are received to licence application, aggressive marketing campaign will start once licence has been granted.

Quarter 1

Arrangements progressing, paperwork almost complete and cosmetic repairs to Town Hall in house. We expect the licence application to be submitted by the end of July.

Target 14 - Implement a Customer Relationship Management software system to develop a more customer-focused approach and improve access to our services. By capturing all requests for services, compliments and complaints centrally we can track responses and trends and learn from our mistakes and share good practice.

Quarter 3 – on target

Corporate Complaints and core system enhancements written. User acceptance testing to commence in Q4.

Quarter 2 - On target

Processes for handling Corporate Complaints through CRM have been designed and will be implemented through Q3. The core system has now been live for 6 months, and we have commenced a redesign of the screens to address staff suggestions for enhancements.

Quarter 1

CRM system installed, configured and linked to the electoral registration system. All election queries since 1st April have been handled by the HIC utilising phone technology and CRM. HIC staff, supported by CRM, handle simple queries, whilst complex queries are recorded in CRM and routed to the Electoral Registration Office for resolution.

Target 15 - Provide customers with a wider choice of payment options by enabling customers to make payments such as Council Tax online.

Quarter 3 – Achieved

Paypoint payment system launched. Bills are now printed with barcodes that allow customers to make payments at any Paypoint outlet

Quarter 2 - Achieved

Quarter 1

Council Tax bills, Business Rate bills, General Invoices, Parking Fines and Planning Application fees can all be paid online.

Local Performance Plan 2005-06: Shortfalls Update

A new Geographical Information System (GIS) has been installed and links made to other major Council systems. Work to make further property and planning

g history available in the form of electronic maps has been delayed due to the scale and complexity of the current implementation. Work is expected to be completed by early 2007.

Qtr 3 Progress - Implementation delayed

We have worked with colleagues in planning to prioritise planning related IT enhancements to maximise this year's Planning Delivery Grant. This has necessitated a rescheduling of this target. Implementation of the 'LocalView' product should be completed by September 2007.

Qtr 2 Progress - On target

Now that our GIS is available to all staff through the intranet, we are investigating products to publish some mapping data on the website. A plug-in product, which would include 'find my nearest' services for schools and other facilities, has been identified and is being investigated.

Qtr 1 Progress

Work on GIS rollout continues. We are on target to deliver public access to GIS by the end of 2006/07.

Our Review of Administrative Processes and office support did not take place during 2005/06. The review has been absorbed in our 2006/07 cross-cutting efficiency reviews and is expected to produce proposals for administrative change by the end of 2006.

Quarter 3 – on target with risks identified

The review group has agreed a set of recommendations and we will be consulting staff on the proposed changes. Our aim is to fully implement these changes during the 2007/08 financial year.

Quarter 2 - On target

The Working Group meets bi-weekly to analyse various aspects of administration. An interim report is being prepared for November as input to the-budget reviews.

Quarter 1

Working group set up to review Administrative Processes and office support.

Deputy Chief Executive - Local Performance Plan update - 2006/07

Target 1 - Strengthen our Overview and Scrutiny Committees' role in performance management of the council and it's contribution to achieving shared targets with partners e.g. the East Sussex wide Local Area Agreement and the Community strategy.

Qtr 3 Progress – On target

Quarter 2 performance reports went to the December quarterly Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) committees. The 2006/2007 O&S work programme is being successfully progressed. Two of the three scrutiny reviews underway are near completion and one of the three areas of policy development is also near completion. Two further scrutiny reviews and a Best Value review will commence in early 2007. Special meetings of the two committees have been organised for February to consider the 2007/2008 budget and corporate plan. Included in the Overview and Scrutiny work programme are policy development reviews of affordable housing policy that directly links with target 16 of the Community Strategy, and developing a policy on Local Area Co-ordination and how its working

Qtr 2 Progress - On Target

Quarter 1 performance reports went to the September quarterly Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) committees. The new O&S structure places a greater focus on the key performance monitoring role of O&S and there was a positive shift at the September meetings in the amount of time given to considering the reports, with a sharper focus on the key performance and public service delivery issues. Two of the programmed scrutiny reviews underway are focussing on council performance and financial management; Collection of Council Tax and Use of Consultants and Advisors.

Qtr 1 Progress

Performance Management Training was provided to Members as part of the induction training programme. New structure introduced focussed on policy development, service reviews and monitoring implementation of Cabinet decisions. Members have agreed a work programme for 2006/2007. Two training sessions run for members.

Target 2 - Ensure our new internal financial management system is fully implemented and offers us opportunities to make our council-wide systems more effective.

Quarter 3 - On target

(Also refers to Change/Shortfall from 2005/06 LPP see below)
The results of the Agresso Financial Management System user satisfaction survey have been collated. Of the c350 Agresso users, 110 responded - 31% of the total. An exercise now needs to be undertaken

to analyse in greater depth the responses including the large number of comments regarding the questions on problems encountered by users, their suggestions for improvements and additional remarks. An action plan will then be developed.

Quarter 2 - On Target

Position as Quarter 1. User survey being undertaken in quarter 3 and results will be summarised for a future O&S meeting.

Quarter 1

System fully implemented as far as existing version is concerned. Further training being offered to those seeking to expand their knowledge of the system. Little progress yet on expanding the electronic procurement aspects of Agresso (eg. suppliers electronic catalogues). Specialist technical resources are required to implement this. No date on the horizon for the system upgrade to the latest version. This contains solutions to a number of 'bugs' in the current one. Any upgrade is totally dependent on our other partners being in a position to proceed in tandem with ourselves

Target 3 - Ensure the Council's plans and activities are affordable and our resources are continually reviewed and allocated to our priorities and offers value for money for council taxpayers.

Quarter 3 – On target

A draft Corporate Plan and Budget have been approved by Cabinet for consultation. Development of the Corporate Plan and Budget was informed by consultation with the Citizens' Panel and the outcome of the PIER review process. PIER reviews looked at Priorities, Income, and Expenditure within the organisation and identified £900,000 savings.

The Audit Commission is currently reviewing our performance regarding Use of Resources, Value for Money and Direction of Travel by assessing changes from the baseline self-assessments we submitted last year. The outcome of this assessment will be reported to the Audit Committee on 27th March.

Quarter 2 - On target

'Key lines of Enquiry' have been received from the Audit Commission regarding the Use of Resources and VFM assessments for 2006/07. The Council's self-assessments will be submitted in quarter 3 and dialogue/on-site work with Auditors will be undertaken, with a view to their assessment being made available in quarter 4. Internal Priorities, Income and Expenditure Reviews (PIER reviews) will be undertaken in quarter 3 and will inform budget and priority setting.

Quarter 1

The Council's plans and activities are continually monitored through our best practice performance management framework. The Priorities Income and Expenditure Reviews, combined with Best Value Reviews

and Scrutiny Reviews ensure that services are reviewed to offer best value. Work is underway to implement improvements highlighted in the 'Use of Resources' and 'Value for Money' assessments and to prepare for the next assessment. Work to develop a new Corporate Plan is underway.

Target 4 - Strengthen our fraud investigation work to attempt to ensure benefits are only paid to those who are entitled to them.

Quarter 3 - On Target with risks identified

There is just one action outstanding on the BFI action plan. Progress on it is well advanced and will be complete in advance of 31st March 2007. The DWP were pleased with progress made. The exceptions relate to 2 of 3 BVPI's that have been adversely affected as a direct result of an instance of long-term sick leave. Referrals continue to stream in and management action is being actively taken to restore performance.

Quarter 2 - On Target with Exceptions

Staffing instability and previous long term sickness has interfered with the flow of work. The BFI action plan is on target for completion by the agreed date of 31st March 2007. The actions from this plan are already being used to develop suitable cases as a priority. The DWP are pleased with the progress made.

Quarter 1

A new Fraud Investigation Manager started on the 26th June. Interviews for the additional Fraud Investigator's post were held on 7th July and a candidate was offered and has accepted the post. The Benefit Fraud Investigate (BFI) action plan is on target for completion on the agreed date of 31st March 2007.

The performance for the first quarter is below the targets set. With the filling of the vacant posts and the implementation of new working practises it is anticipated that the targets for the year will be achieved.

Target 5 - Investigate with councils across East Sussex ways of improving joint working in order to provide better value for money for Council Tax payers.

Quarter 3 – On target

The five East Sussex local authorities electoral services officers have worked jointly to develop a common approach to implementing postal vote requirements contained in the new electoral legislation. Discussions are underway with electoral services IT software suppliers to look at HBC and Rother using the same IT package to assist with joint working. HBC electoral services will be assisting Rother with their 2007 district elections and Rother have offered to store HBC election equipment in their storage facility freeing up storage space in HBC. The East Sussex Democratic Services officers network are meeting in early 2007 to receive a report on a joint approach to member training.

Discussions with Rother DC to carry out their fraud investigation activities on a fee-earning basis has been brought within the East Sussex Joint Improvement Project (ESJIP) Board "East Sussex Fraud Partnership". Their project manager presented a draft business case to the ESJIP board in December 2006 and again with refinements during January this year for onward transmission to the East Sussex Chief Executives Network. Key points within the proposal are that Eastbourne Borough Council will be the 'host' authority for the partnership and that the anticipated efficiency savings are significant. The business case will now be submitted to Cabinet for consideration and authorisation to proceed.

ESJIP investigations in respect of joint working on Revenues and Benefits is ongoing and a detailed business case for a Shared Service Centre approach is being drawn up.

Quarter 2 - On Target

A joint working project between Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council Electoral Services is being developed. The aims are to jointly identify opportunities for improving operational efficiency and customer service, and identifying savings and efficiencies from the sharing of best practice, resources and joint procurement.

Member training and development officers from the East Sussex local authorities have agreed to consider the scope for a East Sussex wide member training and development programme, supplemented as required by authorities specific needs. HBC member training and development officer is co-ordinating this activity.

The East Sussex Joint Improvement Project Board are currently considering the best options to test the feasibility in respect of joint working on Revenues and Benefits.

Discussions with Rother DC to carry out their fraud investigation activities are well advanced.

Quarter 1

This work has initially focussed on joint working between Benefits and Revenues. The preliminary business case demonstrated that there are potential service benefits by working in partnership including improved customer care, added resilience and efficiencies. However there are also significant issues to overcome if these are to be realised. These include accommodation, governance and, most importantly, the 'people' issues.

As a result of this, the group has agreed to move forward to produce a more detailed business case to enable them to consider the issues fully, before deciding whether to proceed any further.

This work will also be expanded to look at other areas such as Legal, Audit and Building Control, and joint working has been asked to be on the agenda for all peer network meetings across the County.

Target 6 - Improve collection rates for both Council Tax and business rates over that achieved in 2005/06.

Quarter 3 - Will not meet target

Despite being up to date with processing, additional bailiffs on the patch and more pro-active recovery work, we will struggle to improve on last year's collection rate for Council Tax. Elsewhere on your agenda is a report from your Review Group who have been looking in detail at this service area.

Regarding Business Rates, it is becoming clear that additional charges arising from the revaluation effective from 2005-06 is having an impact on collection rates as the transitional protection arrangements unwind. It is therefore becoming increasingly unlikely that performance will improve on that achieved in 2005-06.

Quarter 2 - Slippage Possible

No significant improvement. Additional resources were made available during August to help clear backlog. Additional bailiffs are in place. Recovery timetable has been reviewed and subsequently brought forward to ensure we maximise potential cash collection. A temporary recovery officer is in post undertaking pro-active recovery work.

Work is underway with Legal re: placing of charging orders and issuing bankruptcy proceedings.

Quarter 1

A Scrutiny Review of Council Tax Collection commenced at the end of July 06.

Target 7 - Increase the number of Council Tax payments received electronically.

Quarter 3 - On target

Customers are being encouraged to pay by Direct Debit. Not only are details included with bills, but we also have information on the Council's website with a link to download a Direct Debit mandate. Currently 62% of our customers pay via this method, which is around the national average as per a recent Audit Commission report.

Quarter 2 - On target

On-going work as part of the cash office closure.

Quarter 1

A small working group has been set up to oversee the closure of the Cash Office. Methods of payment are being addressed as part of that project.

Target 8 – Work with the Pension Service to encourage pensioners who may be entitled to Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit to apply.

Quarter 3 - On target

During the quarter, a representative from the Pensions Service visited 40 pensioners in their homes. The following is a breakdown of the results: 10 received benefit for the first time; 10 had their benefit reduced as their circumstances had changed and we had not been notified; 15 were already receiving benefits and there was no change; the remaining 5 did not follow up their claims with the required information.

Quarter 2 - On target

As in first quarter, visits continue.

Quarter 1

The Pension Service are sending 'Visit lists' on a monthly basis. These are cases where a pensioner has been visited & encouraged to complete an HB/CTB claim. The Pension Service are then following up the cases with the LA in order to assess their success rate.

Target 9 - Further improve our Benefits performance and achieve the national Performance Standards for processing claims.

Quarter 3 - On target with risks identified

Continuing to make good progress. The Performance Indicator most at risk is the Change of circumstances. However under the Performance Standards, our current processing time still keeps us in the second quartile.

Quarter 2 - On target with risks identified

Despite continuing staff problems, steady progress being made. However, it may not be possible to expect to meet target on all standards.

Quarter 1

First quarter performance has not been as good as hoped for. Due to an increase in staff sickness, maternity leave & resignations, the first quarter has been difficult.

Target 10 - Invest in the Priory Meadow extension scheme as an 'invest to save' project which will see an annual return on our investment.

Quarter 3 – Will not meet target

This scheme will not happen in the original timescale, due to negotiations between the head lessee and a tenant being more difficult than anticipated. The Council's capital programme provision has been re-allocated to 2008-09

Quarter 2 - On target

Detailed property negotiations - on-going

Quarter 1

Detailed property negotiations - on-going

Target 11 - As a result of Best Value review into Cash Collection, we will increase the number of outlets at which people can pay their Council Tax and business rates.

Quarter 3 - On target

The Cash Office closed on Friday 2 February 2007. In order to offer our customers more choice, we have introduced payments via Post Office Counters and PayPoint. As these methods of payment were only introduced in early December 06, it is too early to comment on the take-up. The real test will be when the annual Council Tax bills, complete with barcodes, are dispatched in early March.

Quarter 2 - On target

Timetable has been agreed re closure of cash office. This takes into account alternative payment methods. A contract has been entered into with the Co-op Bank re the provision of Pay Point – this will potentially provide our customers with 38 new outlets.

Local Performance Plan 2005-06: Shortfalls Update:

1. A new Financial System to enable us to access 'real time' financial information was installed in June 2005, however significant problems within the system were experienced during its' extended roll-out period. These difficulties are now behind us, and, for the future, the system provides a platform for improving both our internal processes and procurement processes.

Quarter 3

System fully implemented as far as existing version is concerned. Further training being offered to those seeking to expand their knowledge of the system. Little progress yet on expanding the electronic procurement aspects of Agresso (eg. suppliers electronic catalogues). Specialist technical resources are required to implement this. No date on the horizon for the system upgrade to the latest version. This contains solutions to a number of 'bugs' in the current one. Any upgrade is totally dependent on our other partners being in a position to proceed in tandem with ourselves