

Performance and Financial Monitoring - Quarterly monitoring against targets in Corporate Plan Part II

Quarter 1 progress – to 30th June 2008

Target Status 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

A. FINANCIAL SERVICES – 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1. Produce a balanced budget for 2009/10 that takes account of evolving priorities and known financial pressures.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – the budget exercise will commence in the second quarter.

Target 2. Work with partners to upgrade Agresso software and prepare for further automation of procurement activities.

QTR 1 – Slippage possible

Progress – our partners do not wish upgrade until at least 2009/10 at the earliest. We are examining ways of progressing without their involvement.

Target 3. Achieve annual accounts and budget timetables.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – final accounts report and Statement of Accounts were approved by Audit Committee on the 30th June. Currently the audit of our accounts is underway.

Target 4. Consolidate our Use of Resources Assessment position.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The assessment has been made tougher and efforts have been made to respond to this. The external auditors will commence their assessment in quarter 2 and report the results in quarter 3.

Target 5. Continue to improve Council tax and business rates collection.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – Despite a more difficult economic climate in which to collect taxes, 35.8% of Council Tax was collected in the first quarter compared with 35.4% in the corresponding period last year.

Target 6. Continue to monitor and meet Benefits performance targets in respect of new claims and change of circumstances.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – A solid start to the year, which has established a good base.

Target 7. Ensure the successful implementation of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Housing Benefits Scheme to support private tenants on low incomes renting from private landlords.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – LHA claims are being processed promptly and to date there have been no major issues. Continuing to monitor the situation & liaising with appropriate internal & external stakeholders.

Target 8. Improve the telephone service to Revenues customers by monitoring staff performance, identifying and providing for training needs and conducting customer satisfaction surveys during the year.

QTR 1 – On target with risks identified

Progress – Closely monitoring 'waiting' times. Since April, the average waiting time has been around 4 minutes. This includes 1 minute 17 seconds of standard recorded message options. Extra resources have also been made available until the move to Aquila House.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

A number of shortfalls against targets for 2007/08 were identified in Part III of the Corporate Plan, updates against these are either addressed within 2008/09 targets above or are reported separately below:

2007/08 Target 14.10. Relocate frontline services to provide more customer friendly accommodation and greater resilience in customer services.

The position @ 30th June 2008 as reported in Part III was that:

Our plans to relocate our front-line services to provide more customer friendly accommodation and ensure greater resilience within our customer services section were delayed due to protracted negotiations with the landlords of the building. Although the planned relocation is well behind schedule, progress is being made. Once the lease is signed, the necessary works can be completed enabling a move date in early 2009.

2008/09 QTR 1 – On target with risks identified

Progress – Leases and consent now signed. Necessary works will be starting during August with an entry date of around end of November.

B. PERSONNEL AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1. Agree and implement a single equalities scheme combining all equalities plans, and work towards moving from Level 3 to level 4 of the Equalities Standard for Local Government in subsequent years.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – A Personnel Project Officer is helping us with this piece of work and developing a Draft Single Equalities Scheme, including setting targets and objectives corporately and service by service to ensure consistency.

Target 2. Continue to review policies and procedures to take account of all existing and emerging equalities legislation.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The Managing Change, Disciplinary and Honorarium policies and procedures have been reviewed in consultation with the Trade Unions.

Target 3. Continue to work with Directorates and external partners to deliver on the disability and gender action plans.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The Draft Single Equalities Action Plan (see target 1) will incorporate the Disability and Gender Action plans, this is being developed in consultation with Heads of Service and lead officers across the organisation.

Target 4. Review and amend the Race Equality action plan after consultation with Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and staff.

QTR 1 –on target

Progress – The Race Equality Action Plan is being reviewed as part of the development of the Single Equalities Action Plan. Additionally we are reviewing our consultation and engagement processes to ensure that we are reaching all groups and in particular the 'harder to reach' groups.

Target 5. Implement a management competency framework for Senior Managers to define what management skills and behaviours we need as an organisation to manage staff and services effectively.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – Heads of Service and Senior Managers have been using the competency based appraisal process from early 2008. This will be rolled out to line managers as part of the 6 monthly review process in quarter 3.

Target 6. Continue to implement organisational changes, resulting from the review of our administration procedures and public contact arrangements, to improve the quality of customer experience.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – Call handling staff were recruited to assist with answering calls in waste services, with 6 people being trained to respond to calls regarding twin bins service area, or the Information Centre (HIC) or Revenues and Benefits.

Target 7. Continue to address stress and stress-related problems experienced by Council staff, develop and implement a Stress Action Plan, and undertake a staff survey.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – A staff survey was undertaken which included Health and Safety Executive (HSE) suggested questions on stress. The results are being analysed and appropriate response being identified for the action plan.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS 2007/08

A number of shortfalls against targets for 2007/08 were identified in Part III of the Corporate Plan, updates against these are either addressed within 2008/09 targets above or are reported separately below:

Target 11.1. Achieve Level 3 of the Local Government Equalities Standard by March 2008.

The position @ 30th June 2008 as reported in Part III was that:

Although we had aimed to achieve level 3 of the Equalities Standard by March 2008, assessment of our organisation by a 'critical friend' from the IDeA has highlighted the need to focus on gathering evidence prior to a formal assessment. Consequently, we have reviewed this target and now aim to achieve Level 3 by December 2008.

QTR 1 – On target with risks identified

Progress – We have taken action in the following areas:

- Monitoring – current monitoring form revised, one for service users and one for staff.
- Equality impact assessment process reviewed and updated to simplify the initial screening process and to improve the subsequent assessment of impact and risk of an adverse impact.
- Training preliminary outlines developed for learning programmes focused on 'working with difference'.
- Assessment of each service area to identify current progress has commenced. One to one interviews with Corporate Directors and Heads of Service undertaken in June.

Target 11.7. Review, support and implement structural organisational changes resulting from the management re-structure, administrative review and review of our public contact channels.

The position @ 30th June 2008 as reported in Part III was that:

We successfully supported staff through a management restructure and introduced a model of having a core administrative team in each one of our buildings. However further work is needed to deliver greater efficiencies from the review of our administrative processes.

QTR 1- Slippage

Progress – Unlikely to be completed this financial year due to slippage relating to the various office moves.

C. INTERNAL AUDIT AND INVESTIGATIONS 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1. Provide a shared Fraud Investigation service to Rother District Council meeting their service requirements and generating savings for Hastings Borough Council.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – Hastings Borough Council is ready to provide a shared Fraud Investigation service to Rother DC. Hastings BC Legal Services are making some final checks over the agreement and have been liaising with Rother DC Legal Services.

Target 2. Embed our risk management processes and develop identification and recording throughout the organisation of significant partnership and opportunity risks.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – The original plan for roll-out of risk management training and embedding the processes has been expedited. Detailed records on progress are being maintained for effective stewardship by the Risk Management Group and Senior Management. The Risk Register has populated profiles for significant partnerships and a few opportunity risks (as they arise). In addition, priority is being given to updating the Risk Register with significant Contract Risks.

Target 3. Continue to deliver the Audit Plan and report outcomes to the Audit Committee.

QTR 1 – On Target with Risks Identified

Progress – Progress against the published audit plan started off well with one of the three fundamental audits fieldwork completed, the second fundamental audit planned and completion of the Local Area Agreement Grant Audit finished within the timescales. Audit has been carrying out some high priority internal controls work that was not on the audit plan. At this stage we are not certain what effect this priority work will have but we are confident that we will have all three fundamental audits completed by end of quarter 3.

Target 4. Continue to review our procurement arrangements and, working in collaboration with other local authorities and “Improvement and Efficiency South East” (formerly South East Centre of Excellence), put in place improved arrangements for supplies and service contracts.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – Progress is measured against the Procurement Work Programme and the following tasks have been achieved:

- Developed new energy procurement contract collaboration arrangements with London Authorities & South East Region (LASER) for the Council's future energy procurement requirements ahead of schedule.
- New staff agency contract put in place with effect from 1 July 2008.

- New Sustainable Procurement Policy written by Procurement and Policy & Performance agreed by Cabinet, 9th June 2008 and adopted.
- Provided appropriate advice and guidance on selection of the new tree works contractors with effect from 1st July 2008.
and additionally,
- Organised a seminar for all Sussex Local Authorities exploring options for procuring Cash Collection services.

D. LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1: Continue discussions and negotiations with the Foreshore Trustees and the Charity Commission to seek a satisfactory conclusion to Sea Front issues.

QTR 1 – On target with risks identified

Progress – The settlement agreement has been signed and the proposed transfers of land to rationalise Trust boundaries were notified to the Foreshore Trustees in accordance with the Cabinet decision on 31 March 2008. As at the end of the Quarter, the response of the Foreshore Trustees has not been received. In relation to the future of the Trusteeship, the Trustees were given detailed comments following Cabinet on 31 March. The Foreshore Trustees are currently considering a draft Scheme prepared by the Charity Commission. Once the Trustees have given their comments, the draft will be sent to the Council for comment.

Risks – whilst there appears to be progress towards a Scheme reinstating the Council as Trustee, the Scheme will be subject to public consultation and there can be no guarantee that the Scheme will be made. However, this is not a new risk and members have been advised at all times that the settlement of the breach of trust claim and the Scheme are dislocated.

Target 2. Work with other local authorities towards a shared legal service.

QTR 1 – Slippage possible

Progress – Work is continuing though lack of resources have meant that progress has been slow. We have made progress on an inter authority Extranet website where we can share resources such as precedents, procedures and experience generally. We are being encouraged to bid for further funding and this would enable us to engage a consultant to do the work needed to progress this project.

A shared legal service is not the objective of the majority of authorities.

Target 3. Undertake regular review of Council Constitution to enable further improvements to the decision-making process.

QTR 1 – Achieved

Progress – Working Arrangements Group is considering recommendations to Council for adoption at its meeting on 23 July 2008.

Target 4. Enable elected councillors to undertake a comprehensive work programme of scrutiny reviews and policy development work.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – At the Annual Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny on 17 June, members agreed a work programme for the municipal year. In line with existing legislative powers and a strong push from government, the reviews included services delivered by other public sector bodies and commercial providers.

Target 5. Provide a comprehensive training programme for councillors including induction for new councillors, undertaking scrutiny and regulatory functions and responsibilities arising from equalities legislation.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – The Members Training and Development Group provided very positive feedback on the quality, range and cost effectiveness of the training provided to all members following the 2008 Borough Elections and on the planned training for the rest of the year. This includes timetabled equalities training.

Target 6. Ensure that the Councillor Call for Action Regulations are implemented and issues raised under these powers are reported to Overview and Scrutiny.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – It is still unclear when the regulations will definitely appear with autumn 2008 the most talked about time from the Department for Communities and Local Government. It is also not clear what will and will not be included, aside from a strong push on encouraging or regulating Overview and Scrutiny to review services delivered by other public sector or commercial organisations.

Target 7. Review the advantages obtained from the costs attached to membership of the East Sussex County Council health scrutiny committee.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – The appeal against the decision to reduce maternity provision at Eastbourne is awaited and with the outcome potentially impacting on provision in Hastings, it is only right that we maintain membership for now.

Target 8. Support the Council's democratic processes by the timely organisation and management of meetings and production and distribution of agendas and minutes.

QTR 1 – On target

Target 9. Take proper measures to organise the 1st May 2008 Borough Elections efficiently and in accordance with all legal requirements.

QTR 1 – Achieved

Progress – The elections were successfully organised and all legal and electoral integrity requirements were fully met. The Electoral Commission sent observers, who visited polling stations, observed postal vote opening and attended the whole of the count, commented very positively in a detailed report. Members from the three political groups and party agents commented likewise, including on the way we handled the tied vote in Old Hastings Ward.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

A number of shortfalls against targets for 2007/08 were identified in Part III of the Corporate Plan, updates against these are either addressed within 2008/09 targets above or are reported separately below:

Target 18.2 Review first year of new scrutiny arrangements and identify further improvements and training needs.

The position @ 30th June 2008 as reported in Part III was that:

We planned to undertake a review of new scrutiny arrangements using guidance and regulations for Scrutiny expected following enactment of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. The regulations and guidance are expected to be released at the end of 2008 and we will use these to undertake a review at that time.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – We intend to tie up this review with any regulatory or other changes arising from Councillor Call for Action legislation expected later this year.

E. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1. Agree and implement a new Information Strategy to provide a framework for dealing with records management, information security and data quality.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – Our draft Information Strategy has been completed. This will form the basis of discussions in quarter 2.

Target 2. Improve our environmental performance by reducing our collective server power energy consumption.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – Work has commenced on physical room design and technology infrastructure for the new server arrangements.

Target 3. Continue to maintain the Council's IT network, facilitate office moves and provide IT support to enable the smooth running of the Council.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress - 95.03% of 1387 helpdesk calls were closed within target (against a target of 97%). Network availability was 99.99% (against a target of 99.90%). The marketing team were successfully relocated to the Town Hall. The Democratic Services teams were successfully relocated to Bank Buildings. Leisure Services were successfully relocated to Renaissance House. Community Services and parts of Regeneration were successfully relocated in Aquila House.

Target 4. Enable the work life balance of employees to be met and rationalise our use of office accommodation by using technology to enable flexible working for staff.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – We have implemented an enhanced arrangement that enables Planning officers to access their systems from the field, utilising laptops connected by mobile data cards. We have enabled the Revenues and Benefits system to be accessed via Terminal Services. Tests of this arrangement have commenced and are likely to form the basis of our preferred method of delivering the system to home workers. We are working with colleagues in Environmental Health and Housing to implement a field working trial that will provide access to the Environmental Health system.

Target 5. Continue to work with Access East Sussex on the development of shared services.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress - We continue to work with partners in Access East Sussex on joint working options.

Target 6. Develop and implement plans to improve the quality of customer contacts across the Council.

QTR 1 – On Target

Progress – The Overview and Scrutiny report on Public Contact has been completed and its recommendations accepted.

Our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system was updated and enhanced to implement user suggestions for better supporting the local elections. Work has commenced in investigating if the Information Centre type approach for handling customer queries could be replicated for telephone callers.

F. POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS AND SUSTAINABILITY - 2008/09 TARGETS / MILESTONES

Target 1. Continue to respond to external assessments and to demonstrate the Council is achieving 'Value for Money' and improving efficiency, together with quality of service delivery and responding to local needs.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The Audit Commission will be assessing the Council's performance in terms of Value for Money for 2007/08 in quarter 2. Evidence of how we have embedded a culture of efficiency and VFM is being collated. Examples range from joint procurement e.g. new Insurance Contract with Arun and Crawley Councils which saves the Council £100,000 p.a. through to smaller but no less significant sharing of elections resources with Eastbourne BC.

Target 2. Embed changes in council practice arising from the Climate Change Bill, the Sustainable Energy Act 2005 and other policy developments.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The Climate Bill is expected to be published in the Autumn of this year – once published the Council will have a greater understanding of its implications. The Government published its new performance management framework in April which includes 3 new indicators directly related to climate change, of which 2 have been taken forward into the Local Area Agreement. As a result county wide project groups have been established to agree common approaches, and to negotiate targets for each of the indicators.

Target 3. Work with partners across East Sussex to agree and implement a new three-year Local Area Agreement as the key delivery plan for improving outcomes for local people.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – the Secretary of State signed off the new three-year East Sussex LAA on 1st July 2008. The LAA contains 33 targets drawn from the National Indicator set and 16 mandatory education and early years targets. Performance Management arrangements are being established and performance for both quarters 1 and 2 of 2008/09 will be reported together. There are 3 'Hastings only' targets. A number of targets have caveats attached to them, and others are labelled as 'placeholders', (due to the need for final indicator definitions or further data to enable targets to be set). These targets will be reviewed/set in the refresh in January 2009.

Target 4. Work with the Local Strategic Partnership to revise the Hastings and St Leonard's Community Strategy 2003 – 2013, ensuring compatibility with the Local Development Framework, thereby meeting the requirements of the Sustainable Community Act 2007.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – The LSP's Officer Support Group are preparing revisions to the 6 Thematic Chapters of the Community Strategy for consideration at the Council's

Cabinet on 8th September and the LSP on 15th September. The draft refreshed document will then be made available for a three month consultation period up to December. The final refreshed Strategy will be in place for the beginning of the new financial year in 2009.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

A number of shortfalls against targets for 2007/08 were identified in Part III of the Corporate Plan, updates against these are either addressed within 2008/09 targets above or are reported separately below:

Target 19.5. Report on progress in implementing the Council's Climate Change Policy, take further actions as required and take into account emerging national policies.

The position @ 30th June 2008 as reported in Part III was that:

We decided to combine our report with the outcome of a Scrutiny Policy Review of Climate Change. The Review timetable was extended to ensure that Members could consider fully the implications of the new National Indicators relating to Climate Change, the final definitions for which were not available until April 2008. The Review is now expected to report in mid 2008/09. Despite this delay in reporting, we have taken a pro-active role in addressing climate change through a range of activities, examples include: schemes such as 'Heat Streets' where we secured funding for a targeted approach to tackle fuel poverty and energy efficiency; adopting and implementing a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and incorporating climate change objectives into the Sustainability Appraisal framework, which ensures the Local Development Framework policies reflect climate change issues. We also supported the Local Strategic Partnership's Environmental Regeneration Group which is looking to develop a 22nd Key target for the Hastings and St Leonards Community Strategy refresh in 2008/09.

QTR 1 – On target

Progress – At the Annual Overview and Scrutiny annual meeting it was agreed to continue with the Climate Change Policy Review. The first project meeting was held on the 21st July 2008, where it agreed that the Group needed to have cross-party representation. A Conservative Party representative has now been appointed and the next meeting will be in September.