

CORPORATE RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

Quarterly monitoring against targets in Corporate Plan Part II Quarter 3 progress – to end December 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

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 3 – On target

Progress - The first budget report was considered by Cabinet on 15 January 2009 and is currently out for consultation. The Council will consider the budget on 23 February.

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

QTR3 – Will not achieve

Progress - A report on options for upgrading Agresso was commissioned by HBC in Autumn 2008 and has now been received. This has been shared with other partners (Rother and Lewes) and discussions are due to take place with them in early March 2009 on the way forward.

Target 3. Achieve annual accounts and budget timetables.

QTR3 – Achieved

Progress - Annual Accounts closed down for 2007/08 and an unqualified opinion achieved. Budget Timetables all achieved to date.

Target 4. Consolidate our Use of Resources Assessment position.

QTR3 – Target achieved

	2008/9 Results	2007/8 Results
Financial Standing	3	(3)
Financial Management	3	(3)
Financial Reporting*	3	(2)
Internal Control	2	(2)
VFM	3	(3)

*The Council has improved its score in Financial Reporting to a 3 from a 2. This consolidation of the score is against the continuing annual “raising of the bar” in terms of the assessment criteria of the Audit Commission.

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

QTR 3 – On target with risks identified

Progress – Council Tax collection continues to be ahead of last year’s performance and is on target. However Business Rates collection is currently at 91.62%, which is slightly behind our target of 92%.

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

QTR 3 – On target with risks identified

Progress – Performance is still on target. However due to current financial climate and resulting increased caseload, processing days could start to slip.

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 3 – Achieved

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 3 – On target with risks identified

Progress – Performance is now monitored on a monthly basis via the Directorate Management Team. Steady progress is being made. With the move to Aquila House having taken place on 5 January 09, we will be reviewing our targets when staff have settled in and any teething problems resolved.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

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

Reported in Part III: 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 for late summer 2008.

QTR 3 – Achieved

Progress – The new front-line facilities opened on 5 January 2009 as planned.

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 3 – Achieved

The partnership has been in effect since 1 September 2008 and is operating as planned and within budget.

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

QTR 3 – On target

The Risk Management Group expedited training and risk identification throughout quarter 3. Independent reviews of both our Operational Risk and Strategic Risk Management Arrangements were commissioned and are in progress and expected to both be reported in quarter 4. It is anticipated that the Strategic Risk Management review will provide an indication of the Council's level of risk maturity.

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

QTR 3 – On target with risks identified

We are on target to complete the designated fundamental systems audits in the published audit plan this year. However, owing to some injected essential but unplanned work, there is a risk that a small number of lower level risk reviews may possibly need to be carried over into next year.

Target 4. Continue to review our procurement arrangements and, working in collaboration with other local authorities and the South East Centre of Excellence, put in place improved arrangements for supplies and service contracts.

QTR 3 – On target

The main achievement during quarter 3 was the successful conclusion of the cash collection contract including member involvement.

Also during the quarter, a project team was established to examine the best procurement route for replacement of crematorium equipment. A technical advisor has been appointed to assist the Council in the management of this major capital scheme. This is the start of what will be a lengthy process but 2 local authorities have expressed an interest in wanting to access the eventual contract.

Lastly, a project team has been established to have a new contract in place for cleaning of offices and public conveniences with effect from 1 January 2010. Staff have been invited to submit suggestions covering improvements to the existing contractual arrangements.

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 3 – Slippage possible

Progress – The Council is responding to the Trustees' claims to land ownership. The claims are complex and have required considerable research and consideration. Progress has been made with the draft Scheme, under which the Council would again become the sole trustee.

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

QTR 3 – On target

Progress – Whilst this is an ongoing target which is not expected to be achieved by the end of the year, there has been considerable activity and consultants have reported to the East Sussex Secretaries and Solicitors Group, consisting of solicitors representing East Sussex, Brighton and Hove and the 5 districts. It is fair to say that progress is being made towards joint working and procurement initiatives.

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

QTR 3 – Achieved

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

QTR 3 – On target

Progress –

1. On-going Scrutiny Reviews and Policy Development Projects

Corporate Resources Directorate

- Climate Change – Final report to go the March Resources Committee
- Joint Working and Trading Services – Final report to go to the March Resources Committee
- Sickness Absence – Final report to go to the March Resources Committee
- Webcasting of Public Meetings – Final report to go to the March Resources Committee.

Environmental Services Directorate

- Car Parking Provision.

Regeneration and Community Services Directorate

- Seafront Strategy – The review team completed their work in the autumn and with the agreement of the Chair of the Review the report is to go to the March Services Committee.

Community Well-being

The review of the Empty Homes Strategy is being reconsidered in the light of the changed economic circumstances

2. Completed Reviews Awaiting Cabinet Date

Environmental Services

- CCTV Monitoring as a Crime Deterrent – final report to go to March Services Committee

3. Reviews to Commence

Environmental Services

- Highways Contract – it was agreed at the Annual Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny that this review would not commence until the Car Parking and CCTV Reviews were concluded.

Regeneration and Community Services

- Youth Provision and Leisure
- Sewage Systems capacity
- Worklessness

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 3 – On target

The training programme has delivered over 500 hours of training to members over the last year and the Members Training and Development Group meets quarterly to oversee and advise on developing the programme.

Equalities training for the 10 members who were not able to attend the training at the end of 2008 is being organised.

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 3 – On target

The regulations are still awaited from Department for Communities and Local Government. It is anticipated that these will be issued with regulations arising from the governments Developing and Strengthening Overview and Scrutiny consultation paper.

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

QTR 3 – On Target

Discussions continue with the other East Sussex authorities to see if a common position can be reached.

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 3 – On-target

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

QTR 3 – Completed

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

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

Reported in Part III: 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 3 Slippage Possible

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny have agreed to focus the review on improving members understanding of performance management, identifying other training requirements and looking at ways to better promote the work of Overview and Scrutiny in line with the governments intention to strengthen its role and profile.

A draft newsletter for Overview and Scrutiny is being prepared that will be issued quarterly and we will be involving colleagues from policy and performance and marketing and communications in assisting the Chairs and Vice Chairs with the review. The Members Training and Development Group will also be involved to tie in training on Overview and Scrutiny with the overall Members Training and Development Programme.

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 3 – On Target

Progress – We have completed our draft Information Strategy, and draft Information Security Policies and Standards. These will be formally approved in Q4.

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

QTR 3 – Will not meet target

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

In Q4 the new server room will be built, and the baseline of server utilisation established ready for the virtualisation project.

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 3 – On Target

Progress – To the end of Q3, 95.85% of 4166 helpdesk calls were closed within target (against a target of 97%). Network availability, to the end of Q3, was 99.92% (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. The Fraud Investigations team was successfully relocated to the Town Hall. The Personnel and Organisational Development team offices were relocated in the Town Hall. The IT training room was moved to the Town Hall. The Waste Management Team was relocated to Bulverhythe Depot. The remaining Revenues and Benefits staff were relocated from Wellington Square to 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 3 – 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.

We have designed a Terminal Services solution to deliver all departmental systems and desktop applications to home and field workers. This will be implemented in Q4.

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

QTR 3 – 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 3 – On Target

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

Our CRM system was updated and enhanced to implement user suggestions for better supporting the local elections.

Work has commenced in investigating if the HIC type approach for handling customer queries could be replicated for telephone callers.

Call-handling of customer telephone queries has significantly improved over the year, and continues to be an area of focus.

POLICY, PERFORMANCE 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 3 – Achieved

Progress – The External Auditors PKF have assessed the Council's performance in providing Value for Money as part of the wider, annual Use of Resources Assessment. In their presentation to the Audit Committee in January they confirmed we have maintained our score of 3 for VFM against the harder test applied.

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

QTR 3 – On Target

Progress – work has continued on all 3 climate change indicators, examples of activities are listed below:

A seminar for local contractors that provide services on behalf of local authorities in East Sussex is being planned. This event will explain the implications of the indicator, well as highlight free support and advice that is on offer to help companies manage their carbon emissions.

The seminar is being held at the Azur in February and will include a presentation from HBC.

A joint-funded East Sussex LAs research project is underway to identify the impact of extreme weather events on our communities and services. This research will inform the work that is underway for NI 188 regarding climate adaptation. Hastings is managing the joint contract for this work.

Following on from research with a company called PowerPerfactor, we investigated the financial and carbon saving that could be made by installing power optimisation technology. This is now being taken forward as an Invest to Save Project.

The Interreg funded project - Future Cities was approved and a report was presented to Cabinet regarding the project and its delivery.

The implications of the Climate Act are still to be clarified.

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 3 – On Target

Progress –The LAA has been in place since June. Performance against quarters 1 and 2 was reported to the East Sussex Strategic partnership in November 2008. Of the 49 targets the majority (31) were on target – rated Green, 12 were rated Amber with remedial action being taken and 6 were rated Grey indicating data is not currently available. Difficulties with receiving accurate and recent data from Department of Work and Pensions had hampered reporting on the Hastings only target NI 153 – working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods. This has been resolved for quarter 3.

The targets for the indicators that are identified as 'placeholders' are being negotiated with Government Office as part of the current refresh. Efforts are being made to ensure the impact of the economic slowdown is adequately reflected. The results of the Place Survey are also expected during quarter 4 and these will be used to inform the setting of targets and work plans for the perception-based indicators e.g. community cohesion and involvement in decision-making.

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 3 – Will not meet Target

Progress – The LSP away day on 17th December decided to delay finalising the refreshed Community Strategy in order to take account of the information from the Place Survey (expected in early March 2009), the Town Conference which will review our regeneration progress and consider the impact of the economic recession on the shorter term milestones to be included in the Strategy.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS FROM 2007/08:

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.

Reported in Part III: 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 3 – On Target

Progress – the review team met in October and November and prepared a draft report in December. This is being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny at its February meeting.

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 3 – Slippage Possible

As reported in Quarter 2, a new Equalities Framework is being introduced from April 2009, to replace the current Local Government Standard. This is informing the work undertaken by our temporary Equalities Project Officer.

Work is underway to produce a draft Single Equalities Scheme linked to service delivery planning and will be in place by the end of Qtr 4.

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

QTR 3 – On Target

Progress-

- HR Policies are annually reviewed, to keep them in line with any new employment legislation. The Sickness Absence toolkit has been developed in consultation with Staffside. HR have developed monthly briefings on specific areas of employment law as it applies to our own policies and procedures that are being presented to Heads of Service and Senior Managers. The toolkit will be introduced by a series of training sessions for all other managers. There is a potential delay in implementation pending outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Review. The review is focussing on absence management, the “Bradford Factor” and reducing absence. The review is expected to be completed by the end of January.
- Disciplinary and Grievance toolkit was developed in consultation with the unions but there were minor changes required following the publication of new ACAS guidelines. Although this is not a statutory document, the guidance is taken into consideration by employment tribunals. Staffside were consulted on proposed changes to pay protection arrangements. The new policy has been agreed with staff side.
- The Reorganisation, Redundancy, and Redeployment toolkit is being developed, again in consultation with the Staffside.
- Ill-health retirement policy has been reviewed and consulted on.
- Honorarium policy is complete and on the intranet following consultation.
- Secondment policy is complete and on the intranet following consultation

Corporate induction is undergoing a review in response to feedback from managers and attendees. The concept is to make it more ‘on-job’ without losing the value of the welcome from the Chief Executive and the Leader. Heads of Service were consulted in Jan 2009 and the revised programme will be introduced in Q1 2009-10

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

QTR 3 – On target with risks identified

Single Equality Scheme and action plan will take account of this target. Work continues with the disability working group with the first reference group event planned for February. Staff survey conducted in June indicated that there are still issues about lack of women in senior posts. Disability and Gender Action Plans contain 17 actions and 22 actions, 94% and 71 % respectively. Even though 71 % appears low this is as a result of two targets which are only partially complete.

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 3 – On target with risks identified

This target is being met as part of the work of the newly appointed Equalities Project Officer. The introduction of a Single Equality Scheme will mean that this target is subsumed into target 1 as equalities work is conducted simultaneously across all strands. Quarterly reporting on BME staff as percentage of total will continue - currently 4.5%. A number of actions have been completed and the LSP will be a key partner asked to comment during the consultation on the draft Single Equalities Scheme (see target 1)

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 3 –Target achieved

Successfully implemented and work is moving forward to use the new management competency framework to support talent management/ succession planning.

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 3 – On target with risks identified

Progress-

- A task group has been established led by Director of Community Wellbeing. The administrative changes proposed are heavily influenced by office accommodation moves and to the extent in which systems and processes can be improved. Firm proposals are anticipated to be drafted in March.
- A new one-year post of Services Support Manager has been agreed. The priority for this post will be to take responsibility for developing service support units within each building and to focus on corporate processes, eliminate duplication and to ensure efficient uses of administrative resources. It is anticipated the post will be filled by the time of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- We have successfully implemented the next version of I-Trent (a web-based Personnel IT system).

- Revenues and Benefits recruitment exercise – We are piloting a recruitment exercise by testing applicants for their specific characteristics in order to assess their suitability for the job role/task. If successful, it will result in a far more efficient benefit assessment team with reduced staff turnover.

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 3 – On Target

Staff survey indicated comparatively low levels of stress at June 2008. When we successfully re-accredited with liP in December 2008 through a more stringent assessment, the evidence gathered also supported this.

The health and well-being group are currently producing a report and action plan. A subsequent meeting is planned with Health and Safety Executive inspector in Feb, 2009.

UPDATE ON SHORTFALLS 2007/08

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

Reported in Part III: 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 3 – See Target 1 above

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.

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

QTR 3 – See target 6 above