

Quarter 2 progress - to end September 2013/14

Exception Report Summary

The following targets for this committee's area of responsibility in Part II of the Council's 2013/14 Corporate Plan have been identified as exceptions.

Please note, 'Exceptions' are defined as those targets not meeting expected performance and targets achieved. Full details of 'Target Status' are listed in the accompanying covering report.

| Target no./Service | Target Status |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Financial- Annual statement of accounts | Achieved |
| 8. Financial – Local authority Mortgage Scheme | Achieved |
| 5. Corporate – Committee Structure review (part) | Slippage Possible |
| 7. Corporate – Customer Contact Centre | Slippage Possible |

The following updates are given against targets in the Council's Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16.

Targets are listed under the service responsible for delivery. By achieving these targets, the Council will be delivering our overarching priorities for 2013/14 shown below. These are listed in no particular order:

Fairness and Equality

To provide high quality services that meet the needs and improve the quality of life of all our citizens, promoting equality of opportunity through a culture of openness, fairness and transparency, enabling local people to hold us to account.

Economic & Physical Regeneration

To secure economic & physical regeneration that produces high quality new developments while preserving the best of our heritage, promoting infrastructure improvements, economic growth and employment, particularly in tourism, creative industries, and high-tech manufacturing & research.

Narrowing the Gap

To 'narrow the gap' between the opportunities of our most deprived communities and those of the rest of the town, as well as between Hastings and the rest of the South East.

Facing Financial Challenges

To meet the current financial challenges by maximising the resources available to us through efficiency improvements, income generation, attracting external funding and investigate sharing services, maintaining an organisation that values its staff and is good to work for.

Interventionist Council

To keep the town clean, safe and attractive, using direct actions to tackle enviro-crime, poor housing, eyesore properties, derelict land and improvements to the public realm.

Environmental Sustainability

To tackle climate change and improve the borough's environment by reducing our own carbon footprint, maintaining high-quality green spaces, promoting sustainable transport, and encouraging 'green' industries.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

1. Achieve an unqualified audit opinion for the annual statement of accounts.

Measure: Unqualified audit opinion gained by 30th Sept (Quarter 2).

Performance @ QTR 2 – Achieved

Progress – Unqualified Audit opinions were received in September 2013 on the Council's Accounts and also those of the Foreshore Trust.

The Council also secured an unqualified opinion in respect of providing Value for money. Namely:-

“the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2013.”

2. Maintain the occupancy of industrial units against a background of an uncertain economic environment.

Measures: Percentage of void industrial units and actual income versus the budget.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On target

Progress –

Void units

Factory units 1 out of 62 vacant = **1.6 % (Q1 1.6% void)**

Castleham Business Centre East (new) 5 out of 17 vacant = **29.4% void (Q1 29.4%)**

Castleham Business Centre West 15 out of 20 vacant = **75% (Q1 70% void)**

Following the refurbishment in the spring we were expecting it to take some time to achieve good occupancy levels but as at 24 October 3 more units have been let and we have interest in a further 4 units.

Actual income versus the budget.

Budget £662,920 Actual £680,293 Variance £17,373

3. Prepare for the phased introduction of the Government's new 'Universal Credit' commencing in 2013/14 and take appropriate action as necessary.

Measure: Regular reports and updates to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees where there are implications for the Council and the community and action taken as appropriate.

Performance @ QTR 2 – No longer applicable

Progress– As it currently stands, Universal Credit will not be introduced by the government in Hastings during this financial year. Current expectations are that it will be introduced sometime after June 2015. Senior Managers from Revenues and from the Community Contact Centre have attended a site visit and received a briefing on national progress. Universal Credit is

being rolled out to a few further authorities in the country and progress elsewhere, and the lessons being learnt, will be kept under review. No further action will be required in 2013/14, and therefore the target is no longer applicable.

4. Review existing Council Tax Support Scheme (introduced April 2013) and implement new scheme for 2014/15 as necessary.

Measure: Scheme agreed by 31st January 2014.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On target

Progress – All of the East Sussex Leaders and Chief Executive's have agreed to recommend to their Cabinets that the Council Tax Support Scheme stays the same for 2014/15. Our Cabinet will consider this recommendation on 2nd December and Council will make the final decision on 18th December 2013.

5. Give priority within the shared Fraud Investigation Service to more serious cases, working within the Single Fraud Investigation Service requirements (commencing April 2013)

Measure: Number of serious cases investigated.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress – 4 serious cases have been closed in the first half year compared to 25 cases last year (and 16 the year before). However, a higher figure of potential fraud (£471,361) has been identified in the first 6 months of this year compared to £410,988 for the whole 12 month period last year.

There have been a number of high value serious cases investigated where the council has worked closely with other investigative authorities. These have taken considerable resources and have impacted upon the statistics above. Further cases are expected to result from this work over the next 6-12 months.

6. Continue to deliver the annual Audit Plan and report outcomes to the Audit Committee.

Measure: Comparison of audits completed against those on the published audit plan reported in the annual audit report.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On target

Progress – Completion of the annual plan is on target although the Housing Benefit Grant Subsidy work has taken longer than in previous years.

7. Continue to improve the Council's procurement arrangements, working in collaboration with other local authorities, the East Sussex Procurement Hub and other partners.

Measures: Value for money contracts secured, savings achieved and procurement arrangements completed.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On target

Progress – The table below sets out the procurement activity which was concluded during quarter 2 by the ESPH.

The tender for insurances is currently in progress, the contract is to be awarded by end of March 2014.

| Contract Title | Date |
|---|---|
| Single Person Discount | Contract awarded July 2013 |
| Utilities Invoice/Contract Audit | Contract awarded August 2013 |
| IT Security - Two Factor Authentication | Contract awarded July 2013 |
| Empty Homes Review | Agreement June 2013 |
| Printing for Election Canvassing | Contract Awarded July 2013 |
| NNDR / Business Rates Review | Solution and terms agreed September 2013. Order and implementation by mid November 2013 |

- 8. Deliver a second phase of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme within Hastings and St Leonards. The Council acting as guarantor on deposits for eligible first time buyers to help stimulate the local housing market.**
 Measures: Numbers of eligible first times buyers supported onto the housing ladder. Percentage of the £1m indemnity committed.

Performance @ QTR 2 – Achieved

Progress – A second phase of the scheme was launched in late March 2013. As at the 30 September 2013, in addition to the 37 completions in the first phase, there have been 17 completions, 7 offers made and a further 10 applications in the pipeline. Of the £1m indemnity, £875,800 (87.6%) has been committed.

A third phase of the scheme was to be launched once phase 2 was fully committed. This further phase being funded by East Sussex County Council (£1million). The launch has been postponed and is considered unlikely to proceed following Lloyds Bank decision to put further launches on hold as it considers the implications of the Government’s Help to Buy scheme and its involvement in the national scheme.

- 9 Support the new operator to fulfil the potential of St Mary In the Castle (SMIC)**

Measure: SMIC fully reopened and restoration works undertaken.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On target

Progress – The St Mary in the Castle Charitable Trust was established in June and it is anticipated that the lease will be signed shortly. In the meantime the premises is being operated under a tenancy at will arrangement with Buckswood. As reported in the previous quarter the restoration works to 6-8 Pelham Arcade have suffered significant slippage and the estimated completion date is now December 2013.

CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

| Name | Improvement Direction | Actual Sep 2012 | Direction of Travel | Actual Sep 2013 | Status Sep 2013 | Target Sep 2013 | Target Mar 2014 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 6.1 % Council Tax collected in year | Bigger is better | 63.5% | Worse | 62.3% | Not Met | 63.1% | 96.0% |
| 6.2 % Non domestic rates collected in year | Bigger is better | 62.3% | Worse | 62.2% | Not Met | 63.4% | 97.0% |
| 6.3 Average number of days to process new housing benefit claims | Smaller is better | 13.6 | Same | 13.6 | Met | 15.0 | 15.0 |
| 6.4 Average number of days to process changes to housing benefit claims | Smaller is better | 3.1 | Worse | 4.1 | Met | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| 6.5 Average number of days to process new Council Tax Reduction claims | Smaller is better | | | 12.7 | Met | 15.0 | 15.0 |
| 6.6 Average number of days to process changes to Council Tax Reduction claims | Smaller is better | | | 2.3 | Met | 5.0 | 5.0 |

CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Support local democracy by the effective delivery of electoral services activities.

Measures:

- a) Successful management of the 2013 East Sussex County Council election.
- b) Preparation for the transition to Individual Elector Registration (IER) currently proposed for full introduction in 2014.
- c) Polling Places Review undertaken as a result of changes to Parliamentary terms (Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011).
- d) All statutory timetables met in line with Electoral Commission requirements.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- Preparations for transition to IER are well underway and all members have now received a short briefing note explaining the process. We are currently awaiting a ministerial decision as to whether IER will 'go live' as anticipated in the summer of 2014.
- The Polling Places Review commenced on 14 October with a 12 week consultation period and relevant notices have been published on our website and both the CCC and TIC. We are currently collating representations as they come in and will report them to the cross party review team. The final report will be presented to Cabinet on 3 February 2014 for their recommendations, with the final decision being made by Full Council on 19 February.

2. Facilitate the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), to act as the principal strategic forum for collaboration between service providers, community representatives, the voluntary and private sectors.

Measures:

- a) LSP Board is supported to work effectively; in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver services which respond to locally identified need and act as a collective voice with a shared vision for shaping the town.
- b) With partners, undertake the biennial local 'Place Survey' and feed findings into the Council and partners decision-making processes to inform priorities and service developments.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) The LSP Board was held in October, where the central theme was Economic Regeneration through the lenses of both a business perspective and at a more strategic level the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). Presentations were received from Alan Blackwell of SeaChange, Simon Hubbard - Director of Regeneration, Jonathan Dolding - Let's Do Business and Andrew Knight - General Dynamics. The Board also reviewed the progress of the Community Strategy 'targets' and adopted a new set of health objectives.

Copies of the presentations and background papers are available at http://www.hastings.gov.uk/decisions_democracy/our_partners/local_strategic_partnership#lsp_meetings

b) The local Place Survey was completed and results published on the Council website in early October. Results suggest that perceptions of the area have largely stayed the same since the 2011 Place Survey which is encouraging given the difficult financial context. Views received from the survey will help inform the development of the Council's 2014/15 Corporate Plan.

3. Support the Council's transformation to a leaner, more resilient organisation which remains focussed on delivering outcomes for local people as well as supporting and valuing its staff.

Measures:

- a) Managers supported to implement actions in the refreshed Workforce Development Plan (to be agreed by date TBD) thereby ensuring the Council's workforce is equipped to meet new challenges and ways of working.
- b) Deliver an agreed 'organisational and cultural change' programme during 2013/14, building on commitments made at the end of 2012.
- c) Teams assisted to undertake service process re-design and to identify opportunities for efficiency, maintaining service quality and improving customer services.
- d) Engage and support staff throughout the change process by use of regular staff focus groups and a feedback survey.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) The Workforce Development Plan is being refreshed to address our Customer First – One Council programme of change.
- b) Shared Service Architects Programme has been attended by most of the top management team.
- c) A Customer First Project manager has been appointed initially working within the Contact Centre and contributing to the Revenues Service Review, looking at process improvements, customer journey improvements and efficiencies. Other services will be reviewed using a similar methodology.
- d) A staff survey was conducted in September. The response rate was 78%. The results and analysis show an upward trend in staff engagement and more focus by service teams on delivering services that meet customer expectations.

4. Support Members to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Measures:

- a) Annual work programme of Scrutiny Reviews completed to time, cost and specification.
- b) Progress against Corporate Plan targets reviewed quarterly by Overview and Scrutiny Committees to aid transparency about Council performance.
- c) Comprehensive programme of Member training and briefings delivered according to priorities set by the Training and Development Group.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) All scheduled Scrutiny activity set out in the annual programme proceeds as planned. This schedule includes the Bathing Water Quality and Welfare Reform Scrutiny Reviews and work to develop a Scrutiny Charter.
- b) The Scrutiny Steering Group continues to meet in advance of the quarterly Committee meetings to plan their agendas and monitor performance progress.
- c) A full programme of Member training continues. A number of online Councillor training modules have been developed and will be tested through the Training and Development Group. These intend to provide more flexible online training opportunities that should minimise demands on more costly face to face alternatives. The Training and Development Group continues to monitor the trial of tablet devices.

5. Review the Council's committee structures and Constitution with Elected Members, so these remain fit for purpose as the Council contracts

Measures:

- a) Systematic review of committee structures undertaken and findings reported to Cabinet by December 2013.
- b) Working Arrangements Group (WAG) convened and recommendations made for appropriate changes to the Council's Constitution arising from the review, legislative requirements, and to make it more user friendly.

Performance @ QTR 2 – Slippage possible (Part)

Progress –

- a) This work has slipped due to other pressing priorities but will be considered during the remainder of the year.
- b) WAG on 16th October, considered a number of updates which were debated and approved for submission to Council in December 2013, this included the revised Member-Officer Protocol.
The Working Arrangements Group has a rolling programme of constitutional issues to be addressed; these will be researched, reviewed and discussed at WAG prior to being brought forward for Council approval.

6. Project manage the European-funded 'Future Cities' project to support climate change adaptation activities (extended in time until December 2013)

Measures:

- a) Submit the final funding claim by October 2013 (claiming for activity up until 30th September 2013)
- b) Accept delivery of the Map Table and develop a staff and member training programme to maximise the application of the map table

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) the paper work for Claim 10 has been prepared and submitted to the lead partner
- b) the map table has been delivered and has begun to be used by colleagues for project development
- c) The Future Cities Partnership was invited by the funding body to submit a bid for an additional extension to the project which has been

successful, and will fund further activity to embed and progress outputs of the project until December 2014.

- d) The Council backed 'Switched On Hastings' energy switch scheme has been extended until 18th November. Drop in sessions have been provided to assist those without access to the internet. The details of numbers who have signed up will be given at the meeting.

7. Provide an efficient, customer-focussed contact and information service through the *Community Contact Centre*

Measures:

- a) Build on the establishment of the contact centre and continue to improve the experience of personal and telephone callers using our services.
- b) Use intelligence gained from monitoring of customer enquiries and feedback to assist service improvements across HBC.

Performance @ QTR 2 – Slippage Possible

Progress – Following on from the quarter 1 review of the operation of the Community Contact Centre, significant efforts have been put in place to address issues such as staff training, sickness absence, queue management, telephone answering times, avoidable contact and team development.

The Council sought the services of a company called i-three analytics to provide an evidenced-based solution to the range of issues that need to be addressed to ensure the CCC (and Tourist Information Centre) are operating effectively and are championing Customer First principles.

A Contact Centre Improvement Project has been created to implement the changes required; this project is being overseen by a Project Board which includes Leader of the Council, Lead Member and Director of Corporate Resources. The Board is content that the actions being taken are, and will continue to improve the service. This project is focussing on the needs of the customer as its starting point and service users will be involved in the service reviews undertaken.

The separate mini-contact centre was set up especially to cope with expected demand as the new waste contract took effect from 21st October. The newly recruited and trained team have performed well and demand has been met within these resources.

Further details about progress and next steps with the CCC are available in the separate report elsewhere on your agenda.

8. Promote a culture of transparency in everything the Council does.

Measures:

- a) Details of Council assets, pay policy, senior management salaries, resources, decision making, contracts and spending published to aid transparency.
- b) Freedom of Information and other data requests responded to within legislative timescales.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) The council is publishing that which we are required to do under transparency legislation and guidance.
- b) We are meeting our FOI and data requests, however these do place an additional burden on colleagues, and this is felt particularly in some areas e.g. finance.
- c) The Council is also taking its Data Protection duties very responsibly and recently held a specialist training session for staff in the Community Contact Centre regarding what and when it is appropriate to release information.
- d) Officers are undertaking a comprehensive review of our complaints procedures to ensure that we respond effectively to issues raised and we learn from complaints.

9. Deliver an effective Legal Service that plays a key role in delivery of Council priorities.

Measures:

- a) Provision of strategic legal advice for key projects, policies and procedures (including standards, Freedom of Information, Data Protection etc).
- b) Activity to support enforcement and secure prosecutions; robustly defend the Council against actions brought against it.
- c) Activity to ensure the Council is appropriately protected in terms of contracts and property transactions, and is effective at collection of debts and charges against property.
- d) Ensure effective Corporate Governance – appropriate legal advice given to all to support decision making, including quasi-judicial committees and boards.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress – A summary of some of the activity undertaken this quarter includes:

- a) Enviro-crime policy and operational guidance drafted and approved by Cabinet.
- b) Successfully fought an appeal by a landlord against whom we had issued an Emergency Prohibition Order for fire safety concerns. We administered a Housing Benefit Formal Caution; successfully prosecuted a Housing Benefit case – the defendant was sentenced to 180 hours of unpaid work; and 2 breaches of planning conditions.
- c) Our property and contracts work included: completing a contract for Phase 2 Grand Parade; 6 Temporary Traffic Orders, and a General Vesting Declaration for Priory Quarter. 17 Charging orders were actioned, securing £49,500 of money owed to the Council. Over £500 a month negotiated for payments in respect of overpayments of Housing benefit. Footpath diversion order in respect of Fern Road completed. Sections 106s for Farley Bank and Horntye Park Sports Complex were completed.
- d) Legal Services continue to efficiently support all areas of Corporate Governance and quasi-judicial committees and boards.

CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

| Name | Improvement Direction | Actual Sep 2012 | Direction of Travel | Actual Sep 2013 | Target Sep 2013 | Status Sep 2013 | Target Mar 2014 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 7.1 The proportion of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence | Smaller is better | 2.70 | Worse | 3.23 | Not Met | 3.15 | 6.25 |

7.2 Contact centre performance - The review of the Contact centre operation will identify the most appropriate and accurate indicators of the services performance over the course of 2013/14.

CROSS-CUTTING TARGETS 2013/14

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. DELIVERING SERVICES INTO THE FUTURE

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Brief: | Prepare for further significant reductions in Council spending in the future whilst prioritising the activities and projects the Council has capacity to deliver. |
| Director: | Neil Dart |
| Contributions: | All Corporate Management Group |
| Lead Member: | Cllr Birch |
| O & S: | Resources |
| 2013/14 Targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Deliver a programme of consultation to test local priorities with local people and staff.b) Undertake a programme of service and efficiency reviews, prioritising those with the potential for biggest gains in efficiency, cost savings, and/or resilience.c) Seek out and explore opportunities for new service delivery models, including shared services where this will provide efficiencies or resilience.d) Complete a Priority Income Efficiency Review process to inform the 2014/15 budget.e) Produce and publish a Medium Term Financial Strategy.f) Agree a Corporate Plan and Budget for 2014/15 onwards in February 2014. |

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress – The main tasks associated with the cross-cutting target normally take place in the second half of the year.

A service review of the Contact Centre is ongoing and a review of Revenue Services has now commenced. Further service reviews for benefits and housing are planned for the current year. Additionally, a refresh of the ICT Strategy is nearing completion.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been updated and approved by Cabinet on 4 November.

2. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Brief: | To maintain an environment where risk management is an integral part of planning and performance management processes and the general culture of the Authority. |
| Director: | Richard Homewood |
| Contributions: | All Heads of Service |
| Lead Member: | Cllr Birch |
| O & S: | Resources |
| 2013/14 Targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) To maintain an overview of Corporate and Operational risks to the Council.b) To formally review the Corporate Risk Register and report to Audit Committee during 2013/14.c) To formally review the Operational Risk Register and report to Audit Committee during 2013/14. |

- d) To maintain an overview of the Council's Health and Safety Risk Management Policy and procedures.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) The Corporate Risk Management Group meets quarterly and reviews the Corporate and Operational risk registers, monitors insurance claims and procedures for mitigating risk.
- b) The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed quarterly and was reported to Audit Committee on 27 June 2013.
- c) The Operational Risk Register is reviewed quarterly and was reported to Audit Committee on 27 June 2013.
- d) The Health and Safety and Risk Management Policy and procedures are routinely reviewed throughout the year. The Fire risk management and Alert Scheme were reviewed in the last quarter.

3. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Brief: To provide strategic coordination and advice to the Council's policy and forward planning processes, ensuring the Council is maximizing opportunities to tackle climate change and make Hastings more environmentally sustainable.

Director: Richard Homewood

Contributions: All Heads of Service

Lead Member: Cllr Birch

O & S: Resources

- 2013/14 Target(s)**
- a) Oversee implementation of the 2013/14 actions in the HBC Environmental Policy Action Plan.
 - b) Co-ordinate implementation of the HBC targets in the Hastings and St Leonard's Climate Change Strategy Action Plan.
 - c) Review opportunities for exploiting external funding to support corporate environmental objectives.
 - d) Deliver our 2013/14 Climate Local Commitments.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Per capita reduction in CO² emissions in the Local Authority area and Percentage CO² reductions from local authority operations

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) Strategic Environmental Projects Board met in July to review its priorities and action plans
Hastings Collective Energy Switching project is almost completed
- b) Understanding Energy Performance Certificates workshop held with staff around Energy Performance in Buildings

Future Cities claim 10 was completed on time. Future Cities extension bid has been approved.

Map Table used at a Leisure and Amenities workshop and to help plan a wayfinding project.

- c) Answers to the Carbon Economy (ACE) cluster proposal (SAFE-ICE) approved. The first SAFE ICE cluster meeting took place in Hastings 14th/15th October 2013.
- d) The climate local commitments have been published by the LGA and are covered in a) b) and c) of this section.

4. CORPORATE EQUALITIES

Brief: Support the Corporate Equalities Steering Group to embed equality and diversity and take actions that contribute to the achievement of the Council's Equality Objective i.e.

"To provide high quality services that meet the needs and improve the quality of life of all our citizens, promoting equality of opportunity through a culture of openness, fairness and transparency, enabling local people to hold us to account"

In working to achieve this objective we will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people in our town.
- Foster good relations.
- Identify priority actions for each year.

Director: Neil Dart

Contributions: All Heads of Service

Lead Member: Cllr Chowney

O & S: Resources

2013/14 Target(s) Our 2013/14 priority Equality actions include:

- a) Continue to work with partners in accordance with Hastings & St Leonards Equalities and Human Rights Charter and produce an Annual Equality Charter report to the LSP.
- b) Ensure all key Council decisions are informed by consideration of equalities impacts and are 'Poverty Proofed'.
- c) Collate and publish our equality data by the deadlines set by the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. by 31st January each year) ensuring the data we record is as accurate as possible, and is used appropriately to inform service improvements.
- d) Ensure Hastings Borough Council is an attractive employer to all sections of the community.
- e) Work with Stonewall and our staff, residents and local support groups to continuously improve lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans equality.
- f) Continue to work with Disabled-Go to provide accurate information about accessibility in our town on the on-line accessibility guide. Enhance the guide with updates and include details of a further 100 premises following audit.
- g) Seek accreditation as a 'Living Wage Employer' and following an assessment of our contractor's performance

develop an action plan to assist them to work towards achieving the status over appropriate time periods.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) We attend regular East Sussex Equality Co-ordination Meetings as a way of continued partnership working and information sharing across the county.
- b) An EIA timetable is in place and there is an opportunity to regularly review these at departmental meetings.
- c) On target for Jan 2014.
- d) We are trialling different recruitment methods including:
 - designing and preparing adverts to promote Hastings and encourage applicants from a wider pool including the Graduate job seeking process the ‘milkround’, to relocate and work in the Authority.
 - Increasing the number of career graded posts including Housing Options.
 - Attending Job Fairs at colleges and schools providing details of careers within Local Authorities, offering time limited work placements and interview technique training.

The Council has clarified that we do not offer any zero hours contracts.

- e) Our 2013 submission to the Stonewall Equality Index has been submitted and we await the response sometime in the New Year.
- f) In year three of five year programme. Surveys have been distributed to review database of local businesses and venues to enable website to be updated. The project is on target.
- g) All permanent HBC employees are already paid above the recommended level by the Living Wage campaign. HBC is therefore eligible to sign the agreement as “working towards implementation”. We are now contacting key contractors to understand their current practice and their intentions about paying their staff a living wage.

5. ACCOMMODATION AND SMARTER WORKING

Brief: To deliver continuous improvement to the quality and value of our interaction and communications with customers and the community at large. To rationalise and consolidate Council services in fewer larger buildings, maximise the efficient use of floor space and develop fit for purpose, efficient, flexible and resilient administrative support processes. To maximise opportunities for flexible, mobile and home-working in support of these objectives.

Director: Richard Homewood

Contributions: All Heads of Service

Lead Member: Cllr Cartwright

O & S: Resources

2013/14 Target(s) a) Consolidate all operational staff into Aquila House.

- b) Maximise the efficient use of floor space in Aquila House through the introduction of additional hot desking facilities, rationalisation of team locations and the promotion of flexible, home and mobile working.
- c) Release floor space in Aquila House for sub letting to partner organisations to further reduce accommodation costs and develop efficiencies through partnership working.
- d) Complete improvement to accommodation in the Town Hall to provide additional meeting and democratic facilities.
- e) Implement new building support services arrangements for Council buildings and introduce more efficient and cost effective administrative processes.
- f) Extend electronic document and records management systems to all services to provide cost effective improvements in efficiency and reduce storage requirements across the organisation.
- g) Maximise the level of electronic transactions, payments and communications through the Contact Centre, website, text messaging etc.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress –

- a) POD team settled in at Aquila house.
- b) Fourth floor accommodation reviewed and rearranged to accommodate partner agencies in Community Safety Hub.
- c) Accommodation in Town Hall sub let to Pier Trust. Lease for sub letting part of Upper Ground Floor being completed once heads of terms agreed.
- d) Planning application being submitted for refurbishment of Town Hall front office to form an additional meeting room. Adjacent room layout being reviewed to accommodate staff room and IT requirements.
- e) The new Business Support Model has been implemented. The existing resources were refocused and the new structure now provides flexibility and a more appropriate balance between Business Support and service areas. In addition, it has brought together some of the HR transactional and Central Resources activities such training admin, complaints monitoring etc. The new structure has realised efficiencies due to the streamlining of the Support Services Team through a reduction in administrative posts and Town Hall Attendants.
- f) The existing document and records management software (Idox) has been upgraded and has gone live in Planning. It is now ready available for its use to be extended into other teams and service areas. Next service to be integrated into it to be determined shortly
- g) Paye.net has now been rolled out through the council. An upgrade of the current software is due to take place in the near future. This IT development will enable customers further self services online options, such as the ability to set

up direct debits on the web, e-forms and easier online bill payments.

6. ANTI POVERTY AND WELFARE REFORM (TBC)

Brief: To co-ordinate HBC and partnership activity in response to the impact of welfare reform on our local residents

Director: Simon Hubbard

Contributions: All Heads of Service

Lead Member: Cllr Forward

O & S: Resources

2013/14 Targets a) Building on research undertaken in 2012, agree and implement 2013/14 actions in the Hastings and St Leonards Anti Poverty Strategy Action Plan.

Performance @ QTR 2 – On Target

Progress – Work on developing a coordinated local response to the impact of welfare reforms within Hastings Borough is being taken forward by the Council and partners through the multi-agency Anti-Poverty group. A draft anti-poverty action plan, incorporating actions already being implemented by partners during 2013/24, is currently being developed with a view to its adoption by Cabinet in January 2014.