



meeting	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
date	19 January 2009	agenda item number

Report of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Strategic Improvement Programmes / Improvement Framework 2008-12

Purpose of the report

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to consider progress being made by the County Council through the strategic improvement programmes and how this work is being progressed to respond to the findings of the IDeA Peer Review, CPA Corporate Inspection and other recent appraisals.

Background

2. The County Council introduced a new development in its corporate planning processes starting in 2007/08. The development reflected the new organisational structure of the Council in which the four directors have corporate as well as departmental responsibilities. To support this corporate strategic role, a system of programme management was introduced.
3. Five improvement programmes were adopted and these cover the major areas of organisational improvement and development for the Authority. They relate directly to the improvement priorities for "The way we work" theme specified in the Strategic Plan 2006-10, All Together Better.
4. The five improvement programmes were supported by Cabinet on 6 June 2007. They were agreed by Council on 28 June 2007 and included in the Annual Performance Plan 2007-08.
5. The table below demonstrates the relationship between the five improvement programmes and the strategic plan, as well as listing the corporate projects that are being undertaken under each programme.

Strategic Plan improvement priority	Strategic Improvement Programmes	Improvement Projects
Being civic leaders and good partners	Community Strategy	Sustainable Community Strategy
		New Local Area Agreement
		Nottinghamshire Partnership
		Localities - LSPs and neighbourhood governance arrangements
		Service & Budget Devolution
		The 'Regional' Project
		Community Engagement Strategy
		Community Cohesion Strategy
	Member Support	Effective Scrutiny
		SMB & Cabinet Leadership
		Frontline Councillors
		Member Training and Development
		Leadership Model and Constitutional Review
Being responsive	Access & Communications	Communicating with the public
		Notts Connect
		Community Access Points Review
		Customer Insight
Designing the future	Service Development	Ever Child Matters
		Our health, our care, our say
		Building schools for the future
Working effectively	Resources	Policy Options Reviews
		Absence Management
		Pay Strategy (Phase II)
		Performance Initiatives
		Equality Mark Assessment
		Risk Assessment
		Shared Services

6. At the Chief Executive's and Resources Departmental Briefing on 17 October 2007, Members considered the five strategic improvement programmes in more detail and were informed that they had been developed to act as the primary vehicle for delivering strategic change across the Authority.
7. The Chief Executive reported that all five strategic programmes had clear deliverables and agreed dates for completion. Additionally each programme would be led by a senior manager within the County Council with Member Scrutiny to ensure successful delivery.

Use of Strategic Improvement Programmes to respond to the findings of Inspection and Review

8. The County Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment took place in 2008 and resulted in a score of 3 – performing well. As part of this process the Audit Commission made a number of recommendations for improvement.
9. The County Council also invited the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to conduct a peer review from 15 - 19 October 2007 in preparation for the CPA Corporate Assessment. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave consideration to the IDeA's final report on 28 January 2008 and 10 March 2008.
10. Responding to both of these assessments the County Council referred to the strategic improvement programmes as a means of addressing the findings.

Issues

11. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed at the meeting on 15 May 2008 to receive a report on progress against the County Council's strategic improvement programmes at the meeting on 19 January, to
 - provide the opportunity for Member Scrutiny to ensure successful delivery of the programmes
 - provide details of how the recommendations made by the Audit Commission were being addressed through the strategic programmes.
12. At the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under target performance was reported against two of the improvement priorities for the way we work theme – which the improvement programmes fall under.

Improving The Way We Work Theme	Performance Against Target
Putting customers at the heart of everything we do	
Being a civic leader	
Delivering excellent services	

 =not meeting target by more than 10%

 = not meeting a target by less than 5%

 = exceeding a target by more than 10%

13. It was reported to Members at the Chief Executive's and Resources Departmental Briefing on 4 November 2008, that the County Council is establishing an overarching improvement framework for the period 2008-2012 to address recommendations made by the Audit Commission following the CPA Corporate Assessment. The Framework will reflect:
 - **A review of the effectiveness and strategic "fit" of the existing strategic programmes**
 - Findings from the Staff Survey
 - Feedback from Members and the wider leadership forum (i.e. managers in tier 1- 3)
14. The draft improvement framework 2008-2012 was provided to Members at the Briefing and identifies a variety of task and finish groups which will be formed. Each Group is expected work to a specific improvement objective to drive improvements throughout the organisation. The outcomes of these task and finish groups are expected to contribute to the future organisational assessment of the Council as is proposed by the new Comprehensive Area Assessment from April 2009 onwards.
15. A copy of the draft improvement framework is attached as an appendix to this report.
16. The Temporary Service Director Policy Development and Partnership has been invited to attend the meeting on 19 January 2009 to discuss the Improvement Framework and how it:
 - acts upon the findings of the Audit Commission's CPA corporate inspection (and other inspections)
 - reflects the findings of the staff survey
 - builds on the actions identified in the strategic programmes for improvement.
17. As part of this discussion Members may wish to focus on the work to review the effectiveness and strategic "fit" of the existing strategic programmes that the framework is due to reflect.

Recommendation

18. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- i. considers the information provided and identifies any further information required, including any potential topics for review,
 - ii. comment on the improvement framework prior to it being adopted and
 - iii. requests an update on the delivery of the strategic improvement framework 6 months after it is approved

Councillor EDW Llewellyn-Jones Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Background Papers:

CPA Corporate Assessment May 2008 & Response

IDeA Peer Review October 2007 & Response

Chief Executive's and Resources Departmental Briefings on 17 October 2007
& 4 November 2008

Annual Performance Plans 2007-08 and 2008-09